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ENGLISH TRAITS

AND

LECTURES AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

BY

Ralph Waldo Emerson

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1921

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ENGLISH TRAITS

CHAPTER I

FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND

I HAVE been twice in England. In 1833, on my return from a short tour in Sicily, Italy and France, I crossed from Boulogne and landed in London at the Tower stairs. It was a dark Sunday morning; there were few people in the streets, and I remember the pleasure of that first walk on English ground, with my companion, an American artist,[1] from the Tower up through Cheapside and the Strand to a house in Russell Square, whither we had been recommended to good chambers. For the first time for many months we were forced to check the saucy habit of travellers' criticism, as we could no longer speak aloud in the streets without being understood. The shop-signs spoke our language; our country names were on the door-plates, and the public and private buildings wore a more native and wonted front.

Like most young men at that time, I was much indebted to the men of Edinburgh and of the Edinburgh Review, — to Jeffrey, Mackintosh,

Hallam, and to Scott, Playfair and De Quincey;[1] and my narrow and desultory reading had inspired the wish to see the faces of three or four writers, — Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, and the latest and strongest contributor to the critical journals, Carlyle; and I suppose if I had sifted the reasons that led me to Europe, when I was ill and was advised to travel, it was mainly the attraction of these persons. If Goethe had been still living I might have wandered into Germany also. Besides those I have named (for Scott was dead), there was not in Britain the man living whom I cared to behold, unless it were the Duke of Wellington, whom I afterwards saw at Westminster Abbey at the funeral of Wilberforce.[2] The young scholar fancies it happiness enough to live with people who can give an inside to the world; without reflecting that they are prisoners, too, of their own thought, and cannot apply themselves to yours. The conditions of literary success are almost destructive of the best social power, as they do not leave that frolic liberty which only can encounter a companion on the best terms. It is probable you left some obscure comrade at a tavern, or in the farms, with right mother-wit and equality to life, when you

crossed sea and land to play bo-peep with celebrated scribes. I have, however, found writers superior to their books, and I cling to my first belief that a strong head will dispose fast enough of these impediments and give one the satisfaction of reality, the sense of having been met, and a larger horizon.

On looking over the diary of my journey in 1833, I find nothing to publish in my memoranda of visits to places. But I have copied the few notes I made of visits to persons, as they respect parties quite too good and too transparent to the whole world to make it needful to affect any prudery of suppression about a few hints of those bright personalities.

At Florence, chief among artists I found Horatio Greenough, the American sculptor.[1] His face was so handsome and his person so well formed that he might be pardoned, if, as was alleged, the face of his Medora and the figure of a colossal Achilles in clay, were idealizations of his own. Greenough was a superior man, ardent and eloquent, and all his opinions had elevation and magnanimity. He believed that the Greeks had wrought in schools or fraternities, — the genius of the master imparting his design to his friends and inflaming them

with it, and when his strength was spent, a new hand with equal heat continued the work; and so by relays, until it was finished in every part with equal fire. This was necessary in so refractory a material as stone; and he thought art would never prosper until we left our shy jealous ways and worked in society as they. All his thoughts breathed the same generosity. He was an accurate and a deep man. He was a votary of the Greeks, and impatient of Gothic art. His paper on Architecture, published in 1843, announced in advance the leading thoughts of Mr. Ruskin on the *morality* in architecture, notwithstanding the antagonism in their views of the history of art. I have a private letter from him, — later, but respecting the same period, — in which he roughly sketches his own theory. "Here is my theory of structure: A scientific arrangement of spaces and forms to functions and to site; an emphasis of features proportioned to their *gradated* importance in function; color and ornament to be decided and arranged and varied by strictly organic laws, having a distinct reason for each decision; the entire and immediate banishment of all make-shift and make-believe."

Greenough brought me, through a common

friend, an invitation from Mr. Landor, who lived at San Domenica di Fiesole. On the 15th May I dined with Mr. Landor. I found him noble and courteous, living in a cloud of pictures at his Villa Gherardesca, a fine house commanding a beautiful landscape. I had inferred from his books, or magnified from some anecdotes, an impression of Achillean wrath, — an untamable petulance. I do not know whether the imputation were just or not, but certainly on this May day his courtesy veiled that haughty mind and he was the most patient and gentle of hosts. He praised the beautiful cyclamen which grows all about Florence; he admired Washington; talked of Wordsworth, Byron, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher. To be sure, he is decided in his opinions, likes to surprise, and is well content to impress, if possible, his English whim upon the immutable past. No great man ever had a great son, if Philip and Alexander be not an exception; and Philip he calls the greater man. In art, he loves the Greeks, and in sculpture, them only. He prefers the Venus to everything else, and, after that, the head of Alexander, in the gallery here. He prefers John of Bologna to Michael Angelo; in painting, Raffaelle, and shares the growing

taste for Perugino and the early masters. The Greek histories he thought the only good; and after them, Voltaire's. I could not make him praise Mackintosh, nor my more recent friends; Montaigne very cordially, — and Charron also, which seemed undiscriminating. He thought Degerando indebted to "Lucas on Happiness" and "Lucas on Holiness"![1] He pestered me with Southey; but who is Southey?

He invited me to breakfast on Friday. On Friday I did not fail to go, and this time with Greenough. He entertained us at once with reciting half a dozen hexameter lines of Julius Cæsar's! — from Donatus, he said.[2] He glorified Lord Chesterfield more than was necessary, and undervalued Burke, and undervalued Socrates; designated as three of the greatest of men, Washington, Phocion and Timoleon, — much as our pomologists, in their lists, select the three or the six best pears "for a small orchard;" — and did not even omit to remark the similar termination of their names. "A great man," he said, "should make great sacrifices and kill his hundred oxen without knowing whether they would be consumed by gods and heroes, or whether the flies would eat them." I had visited Professor Amici, who had shown me his micro

scopes, magnifying (it was said) two thousand diameters; and I spoke of the uses to which they were applied. Landor despised entomology, yet, in the same breath, said, "the sublime was in a grain of dust." I suppose I teased him about recent writers, but he professed never to have heard of Herschel, *not even by name.* One room was full of pictures, which he likes to show, especially one piece, standing before which he said "he would give fifty guineas to the man that would swear it was a Domenichino." I was more curious to see his library, but Mr. H——, one of the guests, told me that Mr. Landor gives away his books and has never more than a dozen at a time in his house.

Mr. Landor carries to its height the love of freak which the English delight to indulge, as if to signalize their commanding freedom. He has a wonderful brain, despotic, violent and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by what chance converted to letters; in which there is not a style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an English appetite for action and heroes. The thing done avails, and not what is said about it. An original sentence, a step forward, is worth more than all the censures. Landor is strangely undervalued in England; usually ignored and

sometimes savagely attacked in the Reviews. The criticism may be right or wrong, and is quickly forgotten; but year after year the scholar must still go back to Landor for a multitude of elegant sentences; for wisdom, wit, and indignation that are unforgetable.[1]

From London, on the 5th August, I went to Highgate, and wrote a note to Mr. Coleridge, requesting leave to pay my respects to him.[2] It was near noon. Mr. Coleridge sent a verbal message that he was in bed, but if I would call after one o'clock he would see me. I returned at one, and he appeared, a short, thick old man, with bright blue eyes and fine clear complexion, leaning on his cane. He took snuff freely, which presently soiled his cravat and neat black suit. He asked whether I knew Allston, and spoke warmly of his merits and doings when he knew him in Rome; what a master of the Titianesque he was, etc., etc. He spoke of Dr. Channing. It was an unspeakable misfortune that he should have turned out a Unitarian after all. On this, he burst into a declamation on the folly and ignorance of Unitarianism, — its high unreasonableness; and taking up Bishop Waterland's book,[3] which lay on the table, he read with ve-

hemence two or three pages written by himself in the fly-leaves, — passages, too, which, I believe, are printed in the Aids to Reflection. When he stopped to take breath, I interposed that "whilst I highly valued all his explanations, I was bound to tell him that I was born and bred a Unitarian." "Yes," he said, "I supposed so;" and continued as before. It was a wonder that after so many ages of unquestioning acquiescence in the doctrine of St. Paul, — the doctrine of the Trinity, which was also according to Philo Judæus the doctrine of the Jews before Christ, — this handful of Priestleians should take on themselves to deny it, etc., etc. He was very sorry that Dr. Channing, a man to whom he looked up, — no, to say that he looked *up* to him would be to speak falsely, but a man whom he looked *at* with so much interest, — should embrace such views. When he saw Dr. Channing he had hinted to him that he was afraid he loved Christianity for what was lovely and excellent, — he loved the good in it, and not the true; — "And I tell you, sir, that I have known ten persons who loved the good, for one person who loved the true; but it is a far greater virtue to love the true for itself alone, than to love the good for itself alone." He (Coleridge) knew

all about Unitarianism perfectly well, because he had once been a Unitarian and knew what quackery it was. He had been called "the rising star of Unitarianism." He went on defining, or rather refining: "The Trinitarian doctrine was realism; the idea of God was not essential, but super-essential;" talked of *trinism* and *tetrakism* and much more, of which I only caught this, "that the will was that by which a person is a person; because, if one should push me in the street, and so I should force the man next me into the kennel, I should at once exclaim, I did not do it, sir, meaning it was not my will." And this also, that "if you should insist on your faith here in England, and I on mine, mine would be the hotter side of the fagot."

I took advantage of a pause to say that he had many readers of all religious opinions in America, and I proceeded to inquire if the "extract" from the Independent's pamphlet, in the third volume of the Friend, were a veritable quotation. He replied that it was really taken from a pamphlet in his possession entitled "A Protest of one of the Independents," or something to that effect. I told him how excellent I thought it and how much I wished to see the entire work. "Yes,"

he said, "the man was a chaos of truths, but lacked the knowledge that God was a God of order. Yet the passage would no doubt strike you more in the quotation than in the original, for I have filtered it."

When I rose to go, he said, "I do not know whether you care about poetry, but I will repeat some verses I lately made on my baptismal anniversary," and he recited with strong emphasis, standing, ten or twelve lines beginning, —

"Born unto God in Christ ——"

He inquired where I had been travelling; and on learning that I had been in Malta and Sicily, he compared one island with the other, repeating what he had said to the Bishop of London when he returned from that country, that Sicily was an excellent school of political economy; for, in any town there, it only needed to ask what the government enacted, and reverse that, to know what ought to be done; it was the most felicitously opposite legislation to anything good and wise. There were only three things which the government had brought into that garden of delights, namely, itch, pox and famine. Whereas in Malta, the force of law and mind was seen, in making that barren rock of semi-Saracen

inhabitants the seat of population and plenty. Going out, he showed me in the next apartment a picture of Allston's, and told me that Montague, a picture-dealer, once came to see him, and glancing towards this, said, "Well, you have got a picture!" thinking it the work of an old master; afterwards, Montague, still talking with his back to the canvas, put up his hand and touched it and exclaimed, "By Heaven! this picture is not ten years old:" — so delicate and skilful was that man's touch.

I was in his company for about an hour, but find it impossible to recall the largest part of his discourse, which was often like so many printed paragraphs in his book, — perhaps the same, — so readily did he fall into certain commonplaces. As I might have foreseen, the visit was rather a spectacle than a conversation, of no use beyond the satisfaction of my curiosity. He was old and preoccupied, and could not bend to a new companion and think with him.

From Edinburgh I went to the Highlands.[1] On my return I came from Glasgow to Dumfries, and being intent on delivering a letter which I had brought from Rome, inquired for Craigenputtock. It was a farm in Nithsdale, in the

parish of Dunscore, sixteen miles distant. No public coach passed near it, so I took a private carriage from the inn. I found the house amid desolate heathery hills, where the lonely scholar nourished his mighty heart.[1] Carlyle was a man from his youth, an author who did not need to hide from his readers, and as absolute a man of the world, unknown and exiled on that hill-farm, as if holding on his own terms what is best in London. He was tall and gaunt, with a cliff-like brow,[2] self-possessed and holding his extraordinary powers of conversation in easy command; clinging to his northern accent with evident relish; full of lively anecdote and with a streaming humor which floated every thing he looked upon. His talk playfully exalting the familiar objects, put the companion at once into an acquaintance with his Lars and Lemurs, and it was very pleasant to learn what was predestined to be a pretty mythology. Few were the objects and lonely the man; "not a person to speak to within sixteen miles except the minister of Dunscore;" so that books inevitably made his topics.

He had names of his own for all the matters familiar to his discourse. Blackwood's was the "sand magazine;" Fraser's nearer approach to

possibility of life was the "mud magazine;" a piece of road near by, that marked some failed enterprise, was the "grave of the last sixpence." When too much praise of any genius annoyed him he professed hugely to admire the talent shown by his pig. He had spent much time and contrivance in confining the poor beast to one enclosure in his pen, but pig, by great strokes of judgment, had found out how to let a board down, and had foiled him. For all that he still thought man the most plastic little fellow in the planet, and he liked Nero's death, "*Qualis artifex pereo!*" better than most history.[1] He worships a man that will manifest any truth to him. At one time he had inquired and read a good deal about America. Landor's principle was mere rebellion; and *that* he feared was the American principle. The best thing he knew of that country was that in it a man can have meat for his labor. He had read in Stewart's book that when he inquired in a New York hotel for the Boots, he had been shown across the street and had found Mungo in his own house dining on roast turkey.

We talked of books. Plato he does not read, and he disparaged Socrates; and, when pressed, persisted in making Mirabeau a hero. Gibbon

he called the "splendid bridge from the old world to the new." His own reading had been multifarious. Tristram Shandy was one of his first books after Robinson Crusoe, and Robertson's America an early favorite. Rousseau's Confessions had discovered to him that he was not a dunce; and it was now ten years since he had learned German, by the advice of a man who told him he would find in that language what he wanted.

He took despairing or satirical views of literature at this moment; recounted the incredible sums paid in one year by the great booksellers for puffing. Hence it comes that no newspaper is trusted now, no books are bought, and the booksellers are on the eve of bankruptcy.

He still returned to English pauperism, the crowded country, the selfish abdication by public men of all that public persons should perform. Government should direct poor men what to do. Poor Irish folk come wandering over these moors. My dame makes it a rule to give to every son of Adam bread to eat, and supplies his wants to the next house. But here are thousands of acres which might give them all meat, and nobody to bid these poor Irish go to the moor and till it. They burned the stacks

and so found a way to force the rich people to attend to them.

We went out to walk over long hills, and looked at Criffel, then without his cap, and down into Wordsworth's country. There we sat down and talked of the immortality of the soul. It was not Carlyle's fault that we talked on that topic, for he had the natural disinclination of every nimble spirit to bruise itself against walls, and did not like to place himself where no step can be taken. But he was honest and true, and cognizant of the subtile links that bind ages together, and saw how every event affects all the future. "Christ died on the tree; that built Dunscore kirk yonder; that brought you and me together. Time has only a relative existence."[1]

He was already turning his eyes towards London with a scholar's appreciation. London is the heart of the world, he said, wonderful only from the mass of human beings. He liked the huge machine. Each keeps its own round. The baker's boy brings muffins to the window at a fixed hour every day, and that is all the Londoner knows or wishes to know on the subject. But it turned out good men. He named certain individuals, especially one man of

letters, his friend, the best mind he knew, whom London had well served.[1]

On the 28th August I went to Rydal Mount, to pay my respects to Mr. Wordsworth. His daughters called in their father, a plain, elderly, white-haired man, not prepossessing, and disfigured by green goggles. He sat down, and talked with great simplicity. He had just returned from a journey. His health was good, but he had broken a tooth by a fall, when walking with two lawyers, and had said that he was glad it did not happen forty years ago; whereupon they had praised his philosophy.

He had much to say of America, the more that it gave occasion for his favorite topic, — that society is being enlightened by a superficial tuition, out of all proportion to its being restrained by moral culture. Schools do no good. Tuition is not education. He thinks more of the education of circumstances than of tuition. 'T is not question whether there are offences of which the law takes cognizance, but whether there are offences of which the law does not take cognizance. Sin is what he fears, — and how society is to escape without gravest mischiefs from this source. He has even said, what seemed a paradox, that they needed a

civil war in America, to teach the necessity of knitting the social ties stronger. "There may be," he said, "in America some vulgarity in manner, but that's not important. That comes of the pioneer state of things. But I fear they are too much given to the making of money; and secondly, to politics; that they make political distinction the end and not the means. And I fear they lack a class of men of leisure, — in short, of gentlemen, — to give a tone of honor to the community. I am told that things are boasted of in the second class of society there, which, in England, — God knows, are done in England every day, but would never be spoken of. In America I wish to know not how many churches or schools, but what newspapers? My friend Colonel Hamilton, at the foot of the hill, who was a year in America, assures me that the newspapers are atrocious, and accuse members of Congress of stealing spoons!" He was against taking off the tax on newspapers in England, — which the reformers represent as a tax upon knowledge, — for this reason, that they would be inundated with base prints. He said he talked on political aspects, for he wished to impress on me and all good Americans to cultivate the moral, the conservative, etc., etc., and never to call into action the physical strength of the

people, as had just now been done in England in the Reform Bill, — a thing prophesied by Delolme. He alluded once or twice to his conversation with Dr. Channing, who had recently visited him (laying his hand on a particular chair in which the Doctor had sat).

The conversation turned on books. Lucretius he esteems a far higher poet than Virgil; not in his system, which is nothing, but in his power of illustration.[1] Faith is necessary to explain anything and to reconcile the foreknowledge of God with human evil. Of Cousin (whose lectures we had all been reading in Boston), he knew only the name.

I inquired if he had read Carlyle's critical articles and translations. He said he thought him sometimes insane. He proceeded to abuse Goethe's Wilhelm Meister heartily. It was full of all manner of fornication. It was like the crossing of flies in the air. He had never gone farther than the first part; so disgusted was he that he threw the book across the room. I deprecated this wrath, and said what I could for the better parts of the book, and he courteously promised to look at it again. Carlyle he said wrote most obscurely. He was clever and deep, but he defied the sympathies of every body. Even Mr. Coleridge wrote more clearly, though

he had always wished Coleridge would write more to be understood. He led me out into his garden, and showed me the gravel walk in which thousands of his lines were composed. His eyes are much inflamed. This is no loss except for reading, because he never writes prose, and of poetry he carries even hundreds of lines in his head before writing them. He had just returned from a visit to Staffa, and within three days had made three sonnets on Fingal's Cave, and was composing a fourth when he was called in to see me. He said, "If you are interested in my verses perhaps you will like to hear these lines." I gladly assented, and he recollected himself for a few moments and then stood forth and repeated, one after the other, the three entire sonnets with great animation. I fancied the second and third more beautiful than his poems are wont to be. The third is addressed to the flowers, which, he said, especially the ox-eye daisy, are very abundant on the top of the rock. The second alludes to the name of the cave, which is "Cave of Music;" the first to the circumstance of its being visited by the promiscuous company of the steamboat.

This recitation was so unlooked for and sur-

prising, — he, the old Wordsworth, standing apart, and reciting to me in a garden-walk, like a school-boy declaiming, — that I at first was near to laugh; but recollecting myself, that I had come thus far to see a poet and he was chanting poems to me, I saw that he was right and I was wrong, and gladly gave myself up to hear. I told him how much the few printed extracts had quickened the desire to possess his unpublished poems. He replied he never was in haste to publish; partly because he corrected a good deal, and every alteration is ungraciously received after printing; but what he had written would be printed, whether he lived or died. I said Tintern Abbey appeared to be the favorite poem with the public, but more contemplative readers preferred the first books of the Excursion, and the Sonnets. He said, "Yes, they are better." He preferred such of his poems as touched the affections, to any others; for whatever is didactic — what theories of society, and so on — might perish quickly; but whatever combined a truth with an affection was κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί,[1] good to-day and good forever. He cited the sonnet, On the feelings of a highminded Spaniard, which he preferred to any other (I so understood him), and the Two Voices; and quoted,

with evident pleasure, the verses addressed To the Skylark. In this connection he said of the Newtonian theory that it might yet be superseded and forgotten; and Dalton's atomic theory.

When I prepared to depart he said he wished to show me what a common person in England could do, and he led me into the enclosure of his clerk, a young man to whom he had given this slip of ground, which was laid out, or its natural capabilities shown, with much taste. He then said he would show me a better way towards the inn; and he walked a good part of a mile, talking and ever and anon stopping short to impress the word or the verse, and finally parted from me with great kindness and returned across the fields.

Wordsworth honored himself by his simple adherence to truth, and was very willing not to shine; but he surprised by the hard limits of his thought. To judge from a single conversation, he made the impression of a narrow and very English mind; of one who paid for his rare elevation by general tameness and conformity. Off his own beat, his opinions were of no value. It is not very rare to find persons loving sympathy and ease, who expiate their departure from the common in one direction, by their conformity in every other.[1]

CHAPTER II

VOYAGE TO ENGLAND

THE occasion of my second visit to England was an invitation from some Mechanics' Institutes in Lancashire and Yorkshire, which separately are organized much in the same way as our New England Lyceums, but in 1847 had been linked into a "Union," which embraced twenty or thirty towns and cities and presently extended into the middle counties and northward into Scotland. I was invited, on liberal terms, to read a series of lectures in them all. The request was urged with every kind suggestion and every assurance of aid and comfort, by friendliest parties in Manchester, who, in the sequel, amply redeemed their word. The remuneration was equivalent to the fees at that time paid in this country for the like services. At all events it was sufficient to cover any travelling expenses, and the proposal offered an excellent opportunity of seeing the interior of England and Scotland, by means of a home and a committee of intelligent friends awaiting me in every town.

I did not go very willingly. I am not a good traveller, nor have I found that long journeys

yield a fair share of reasonable hours.' But the invitation was repeated and pressed at a moment of more leisure and when I was a little spent by some unusual studies. I wanted a change and a tonic, and England was proposed to me. Besides, there were at least the dread attraction and salutary influences of the sea. So I took my berth in the packet-ship Washington Irving and sailed from Boston on Tuesday, 5th October, 1847.

On Friday at noon we had only made one hundred and thirty-four miles. A nimble Indian would have swum as far; but the captain affirmed that the ship would show us in time all her paces, and we crept along through the floating drift of boards, logs and chips, which the rivers of Maine and New Brunswick pour into the sea after a freshet.

At last, on Sunday night, after doing one day's work in four, the storm came, the winds blew, and we flew before a northwester which strained every rope and sail. The good ship darts through the water all day, all night, like a fish; quivering with speed, gliding through liquid leagues, sliding from horizon to horizon. She has passed Cape Sable; she has reached the Banks; the land-birds are left; gulls, haglets,

ducks, petrels, swim, dive and hover around; no fishermen; she has passed the Banks, left five sail behind her far on the edge of the west at sundown, which were far east of us at morn, — though they say at sea a stern chase is a long race, — and still we fly for our lives. The shortest sea-line from Boston to Liverpool is 2850 miles. This a steamer keeps, and saves 150 miles. A sailing ship can never go in a shorter line than 3000, and usually it is much longer. Our good master keeps his kites up to the last moment, studding-sails alow and aloft, and by incessant straight steering, never loses a rod of way. Watchfulness is the law of the ship, — watch on watch, for advantage and for life. Since the ship was built, it seems, the master never slept but in his day-clothes whilst on board. "There are many advantages," says Saadi, "in sea-voyaging, but security is not one of them." Yet in hurrying over these abysses, whatever dangers we are running into, we are certainly running out of the risks of hundreds of miles every day, which have their own chances of squall, collision, sea-stroke, piracy, cold and thunder. Hour for hour, the risk on a steamboat is greater; but the speed is safety, or twelve days of danger instead of twenty-four.

Our ship was registered 750 tons, and weighed perhaps, with all her freight, 1500 tons. The mainmast, from the deck to the top-button, measured 115 feet; the length of the deck from stem to stern, 155. It is impossible not to personify a ship; every body does, in every thing they say: — she behaves well; she minds her rudder; she swims like a duck; she runs her nose into the water; she looks into a port. Then that wonderful *esprit du corps* by which we adopt into our self-love every thing we touch, makes us all champions of her sailing qualities.

The conscious ship hears all the praise. In one week she has made 1467 miles, and now, at night, seems to hear the steamer behind her, which left Boston to-day at two; has mended her speed and is flying before the gray south wind eleven and a half knots the hour. The sea-fire shines in her wake and far around wherever a wave breaks. I read the hour, 9h. 45′, on my watch by this light. Near the equator you can read small print by it; and the mate describes the phosphoric insects, when taken up in a pail, as shaped like a Carolina potato.

I find the sea-life an acquired taste, like that for tomatoes and olives. The confinement, cold,

motion, noise and odor are not to be dispensed with. The floor of your room is sloped at an angle of twenty or thirty degrees, and I waked every morning with the belief that some one was tipping up my berth. Nobody likes to be treated ignominiously, upset, shoved against the side of the house, rolled over, suffocated with bilge, mephitis and stewing oil. We get used to these annoyances at last, but the dread of the sea remains longer. The sea is masculine, the type of active strength. Look, what egg-shells are drifting all over it, each one, like ours, filled with men in ecstasies of terror, alternating with cockney conceit, as the sea is rough or smooth. Is this sad-colored circle an eternal cemetery? In our graveyards we scoop a pit, but this aggressive water opens mile-wide pits and chasms and makes a mouthful of a fleet. To the geologist the sea is the only firmament; the land is in perpetual flux and change, now blown up like a tumor, now sunk in a chasm, and the registered observations of a few hundred years find it in a perpetual tilt, rising and falling. The sea keeps its old level; and 't is no wonder that the history of our race is so recent, if the roar of the ocean is silencing our traditions. A rising of the sea, such as has been observed, say an inch in

a century, from east to west on the land, will bury all the towns, monuments, bones and knowledge of mankind, steadily and insensibly. If it is capable of these great and secular mischiefs, it is quite as ready at private and local damage; and of this no landsman seems so fearful as the seaman. Such discomfort and such danger as the narratives of the captain and mate disclose are bad enough as the costly fee we pay for entrance to Europe; but the wonder is always new that any sane man can be a sailor. And here on the second day of our voyage, stepped out a little boy in his shirt-sleeves, who had hid himself whilst the ship was in port, in the bread-closet, having no money and wishing to go to England. The sailors have dressed him in Guernsey frock, with a knife in his belt, and he is climbing nimbly about after them; — "likes the work first-rate, and if the captain will take him, means now to come back again in the ship." The mate avers that this is the history of all sailors; nine out of ten are runaway boys; and adds that all of them are sick of the sea, but stay in it out of pride. Jack has a life of risks, incessant abuse and the worst pay. It is a little better with the mate and not very much better with the captain. A hundred dollars a month is

reckoned high pay. If sailors were contented, if they had not resolved again and again not to go to sea any more, I should respect them.

Of course the inconveniences and terrors of the sea are not of any account to those whose minds are preoccupied. The water-laws, arctic frost, the mountain, the mine, only shatter cockneyism; every noble activity makes room for itself. A great mind is a good sailor, as a great heart is. And the sea is not slow in disclosing inestimable secrets to a good naturalist.

'T is a good rule in every journey to provide some piece of liberal study to rescue the hours which bad weather, bad company and taverns steal from the best economist. Classics which at home are drowsily read, have a strange charm in a country inn, or in the transom of a merchant brig. I remember that some of the happiest and most valuable hours I have owed to books, passed, many years ago, on shipboard.[1] The worst impediment I have found at sea is the want of light in the cabin.

We found on board the usual cabin library; Basil Hall, Dumas, Dickens, Bulwer, Balzac and Sand were our sea-gods. Among the passengers there was some variety of talent and profession; we exchanged our experiences and all

learned something. The busiest talk with leisure and convenience at sea, and sometimes a memorable fact turns up, which you have long had a vacant niche for, and seize with the joy of a collector. But, under the best conditions, a voyage is one of the severest tests to try a man. A college examination is nothing to it. Sea-days are long — these lack-lustre, joyless days which whistled over us; but they were few — only fifteen, as the captain counted, sixteen according to me. Reckoned from the time when we left soundings, our speed was such that the captain drew the line of his course in red ink on his chart, for the encouragement or envy of future navigators.

It has been said that the King of England would consult his dignity by giving audience to foreign ambassadors in the cabin of a man-of-war. And I think the white path of an Atlantic ship the right avenue to the palace front of this seafaring people, who for hundreds of years claimed the strict sovereignty of the sea, and exacted toll and the striking sail from the ships of all other peoples. When their privilege was disputed by the Dutch and other junior marines, on the plea that you could never anchor on the same wave, or hold property in what was always

flowing, the English did not stick to claim the channel, or bottom of all the main: "As if," said they, "we contended for the drops of the sea, and not for its situation, or the bed of those waters. The sea is bounded by his majesty's empire."

As we neared the land, its genius was felt. This was inevitably the British side. In every man's thought arises now a new system, English sentiments, English loves and fears, English history and social modes. Yesterday every passenger had measured the speed of the ship by watching the bubbles over the ship's bulwarks. To-day, instead of bubbles, we measure by Kinsale, Cork, Waterford and Ardmore. There lay the green shore of Ireland, like some coast of plenty. We could see towns, towers, churches, harvests; but the curse of eight hundred years we could not discern.

CHAPTER III

LAND

ALFIERI thought Italy and England the only countries worth living in ;[1] the former because there Nature vindicates her rights and triumphs over the evils inflicted by the governments ; the latter because art conquers nature and transforms a rude, ungenial land into a paradise of comfort and plenty. England is a garden. Under an ash-colored sky, the fields have been combed and rolled till they appear to have been finished with a pencil instead of a plough. The solidity of the structures that compose the towns speaks the industry of ages. Nothing is left as it was made. Rivers, hills, valleys, the sea itself, feel the hand of a master. The long habitation of a powerful and ingenious race has turned every rood of land to its best use, has found all the capabilities, the arable soil, the quarriable rock, the highways, the byways, the fords, the navigable waters; and the new arts of intercourse meet you every where ; so that England is a huge phalanstery, where all that man wants is provided within the precinct. Cushioned and comforted in every manner, the traveller rides

as on a cannon-ball, high and low, over rivers and towns, through mountains in tunnels of three or four miles, at near twice the speed of our trains; and reads quietly the Times newspaper, which, by its immense correspondence and reporting seems to have machinized the rest of the world for his occasion.

The problem of the traveller landing at Liverpool is, Why England is England? What are the elements of that power which the English hold over other nations? If there be one test of national genius universally accepted, it is success; and if there be one successful country in the universe for the last millennium, that country is England.

A wise traveller will naturally choose to visit the best of actual nations; and an American has more reasons than another to draw him to Britain. In all that is done or begun by the Americans towards right thinking or practice, we are met by a civilization already settled and overpowering. The culture of the day, the thoughts and aims of men, are English thoughts and aims.' A nation considerable for a thousand years since Egbert, it has, in the last centuries, obtained the ascendent, and stamped the knowledge, activity and power of mankind with its impress. Those

who resist it do not feel it or obey it less. The Russian in his snows is aiming to be English. The Turk and Chinese also are making awkward efforts to be English. The practical common-sense of modern society, the utilitarian direction which labor, laws, opinion, religion take, is the natural genius of the British mind. The influence of France is a constituent of modern civility, but not enough opposed to the English for the most wholesome effect. The American is only the continuation of the English genius into new conditions, more or less propitious.

See what books fill our libraries. Every book we read, every biography, play, romance, in whatever form, is still English history and manners. So that a sensible Englishman once said to me, "As long as you do not grant us copyright, we shall have the teaching of you."[1]

But we have the same difficulty in making a social or moral estimate of England, that the sheriff finds in drawing a jury to try some cause which has agitated the whole community and on which every body finds himself an interested party. Officers, jurors, judges have all taken sides. England has inoculated all nations with her civilization, intelligence and tastes; and to resist the tyranny and prepossession of the Brit-

ish element, a serious man must aid himself by comparing with it the civilizations of the farthest east and west, the old Greek, the Oriental, and, much more, the ideal standard; if only by means of the very impatience which English forms are sure to awaken in independent minds.

Besides, if we will visit London, the present time is the best time, as some signs portend that it has reached its highest point. It is observed that the English interest us a little less within a few years; and hence the impression that the British power has culminated, is in solstice, or already declining.[1]

As soon as you enter England, which, with Wales, is no larger than the State of Georgia,[2] this little land stretches by an illusion to the dimensions of an empire. Add South Carolina, and you have more than an equivalent for the area of Scotland. The innumerable details, the crowded succession of towns, cities, cathedrals, castles and great and decorated estates, the number and power of the trades and guilds, the military strength and splendor, the multitudes of rich and of remarkable people, the servants and equipages, — all these catching the eye and never allowing it to pause, hide all boundaries by the impression of magnificence and endless wealth.

I reply to all the urgencies that refer me to this and that object indispensably to be seen, — Yes, to see England well needs a hundred years; for what they told me was the merit of Sir John Soane's Museum, in London, — that it was well packed and well saved, — is the merit of England; — it is stuffed full, in all corners and crevices, with towns, towers, churches, villas, palaces, hospitals and charity-houses. In the history of art it is a long way from a cromlech to York minster; yet all the intermediate steps may still be traced in this all-preserving island.

The territory has a singular perfection. The climate is warmer by many degrees than it is entitled to by latitude. Neither hot nor cold, there is no hour in the whole year when one cannot work. Here is no winter, but such days as we have in Massachusetts in November, a temperature which makes no exhausting demand on human strength, but allows the attainment of the largest stature. Charles the Second said, "It invited men abroad more days in the year and more hours in the day than another country." Then England has all the materials of a working country except wood. The constant rain — a rain with every tide, in some parts of the island — keeps its multitude of rivers full

and brings agricultural production up to the highest point. It has plenty of water, of stone, of potter's clay, of coal, of salt and of iron. The land naturally abounds with game; immense heaths and downs are paved with quails, grouse and woodcock, and the shores are animated by water-birds. The rivers and the surrounding sea spawn with fish; there are salmon for the rich and sprats and herrings for the poor. In the northern lochs, the herring are in innumerable shoals; at one season, the country people say, the lakes contain one part water and two parts fish.

The only drawback on this industrial convenience is the darkness of its sky. The night and day are too nearly of a color. It strains the eyes to read and to write. Add the coal smoke. In the manufacturing towns, the fine soot or *blacks* darken the day, give white sheep the color of black sheep, discolor the human saliva, contaminate the air, poison many plants and corrode the monuments and buildings.[1]

The London fog aggravates the distempers of the sky, and sometimes justifies the epigram on the climate by an English wit, "in a fine day, looking up a chimney; in a foul day, looking down one." A gentleman in Liverpool told

me that he found he could do without a fire in his parlor about one day in the year. It is however pretended that the enormous consumption of coal in the island is also felt in modifying the general climate.

Factitious climate, factitious position. England resembles a ship in its shape, and if it were one, its best admiral could not have worked it or anchored it in a more judicious or effective position. Sir John Herschel said, "London is the centre of the terrene globe." The shop-keeping nation, to use a shop word, has a *good stand*. The old Venetians pleased themselves with the flattery that Venice was in 45°, midway between the poles and the line; as if that were an imperial centrality. Long of old, the Greeks fancied Delphi the navel of the earth, in their favorite mode of fabling the earth to be an animal. The Jews believed Jerusalem to be the centre. I have seen a kratometric chart designed to show that the city of Philadelphia was in the same thermic belt, and by inference in the same belt of empire, as the cities of Athens, Rome and London. It was drawn by a patriotic Philadelphian, and was examined with pleasure, under his showing, by the inhabitants of Chestnut Street. But when carried to Charles-

ton, to New Orleans and to Boston, it somehow failed to convince the ingenious scholars of all those capitals.

But England is anchored at the side of Europe, and right in the heart of the modern world. The sea, which, according to Virgil's famous line, divided the poor Britons utterly from the world,' proved to be the ring of marriage with all nations. It is not down in the books, — it is written only in the geologic strata, — that fortunate day when a wave of the German Ocean burst the old isthmus which joined Kent and Cornwall to France, and gave to this fragment of Europe its impregnable sea-wall, cutting off an island of eight hundred miles in length, with an irregular breadth reaching to three hundred miles; a territory large enough for independence, enriched with every seed of national power, so near that it can see the harvests of the continent, and so far that who would cross the strait must be an expert mariner, ready for tempests. As America, Europe and Asia lie, these Britons have precisely the best commercial position in the whole planet, and are sure of a market for all the goods they can manufacture. And to make these advantages avail, the river Thames must dig its spacious outlet to

the sea from the heart of the kingdom, giving road and landing to innumerable ships, and all the conveniency to trade that a people so skilful and sufficient in economizing water-front by docks, warehouses and lighters required. When James the First declared his purpose of punishing London by removing his Court, the Lord Mayor replied that "in removing his royal presence from his lieges, they hoped he would leave them the Thames."

In the variety of surface, Britain is a miniature of Europe, having plain, forest, marsh, river, seashore, mines in Cornwall; caves in Matlock and Derbyshire; delicious landscape in Dovedale, delicious sea-view at Tor Bay, Highlands in Scotland, Snowdon in Wales, and in Westmoreland and Cumberland a pocket Switzerland, in which the lakes and mountains are on a sufficient scale to fill the eye and touch the imagination. It is a nation conveniently small. Fontenelle thought that nature had sometimes a little affectation; and there is such an artificial completeness in this nation of artificers as if there were a design from the beginning to elaborate a bigger Birmingham. Nature held counsel with herself and said, 'My Romans are gone. To build my new empire, I will

choose a rude race, all masculine, with brutish strength. I will not grudge a competition of the roughest males. Let buffalo gore buffalo, and the pasture to the strongest! For I have work that requires the best will and sinew. Sharp and temperate northern breezes shall blow, to keep that will alive and alert. The sea shall disjoin the people from others, and knit them to a fierce nationality.' It shall give them markets on every side. Long time I will keep them on their feet, by poverty, border-wars, seafaring, sea-risks and the stimulus of gain. An island, — but not so large, the people not so many as to glut the great markets and depress one another, but proportioned to the size of Europe and the continents.'

With its fruits, and wares, and money, must its civil influence radiate. It is a singular coincidence to this geographic centrality, the spiritual centrality which Emanuel Swedenborg ascribes to the people. " For the English nation, the best of them are in the centre of all Christians, because they have interior intellectual light. This appears conspicuously in the spiritual world. This light they derive from the liberty of speaking and writing, and thereby of thinking."

CHAPTER IV

RACE

AN ingenious anatomist has written a book[1] to prove that races are imperishable, but nations are pliant political constructions, easily changed or destroyed. But this writer did not found his assumed races on any necessary law, disclosing their ideal or metaphysical necessity; nor did he on the other hand count with precision the existing races and settle the true bounds; a point of nicety, and the popular test of the theory. The individuals at the extremes of divergence in one race of men are as unlike as the wolf to the lapdog. Yet each variety shades down imperceptibly into the next, and you cannot draw the line where a race begins or ends. Hence every writer makes a different count. Blumenbach reckons five races; Humboldt three; and Mr. Pickering,[2] who lately in our Exploring Expedition thinks he saw all the kinds of men that can be on the planet, makes eleven.

The British Empire is reckoned to contain (in 1848) 222,000,000 souls, — perhaps a fifth of the population of the globe; and to comprise a territory of 5,000,000 square miles. So far

have British people predominated. Perhaps forty of these millions are of British stock. Add the United States of America, which reckon (in the same year), exclusive of slaves, 20,000,000 of people, on a territory of 3,000,000 square miles, and in which the foreign element, however considerable, is rapidly assimilated, and you have a population of English descent and language of 60,000,000, and governing a population of 245,000,000 souls.

The British census proper reckons twenty-seven and a half millions in the home countries. What makes this census important is the quality of the units that compose it. They are free forcible men, in a country where life is safe and has reached the greatest value. They give the bias to the current age; and that, not by chance or by mass, but by their character and by the number of individuals among them of personal ability. It has been denied that the English have genius. Be it as it may, men of vast intellect have been born on their soil, and they have made or applied the principal inventions. They have sound bodies and supreme endurance in war and in labor. The spawning force of the race has sufficed to the colonization of great parts of the world; yet it remains to be seen whether they

can make good the exodus of millions from Great Britain, amounting in 1852 to more than a thousand a day. They have assimilating force, since they are imitated by their foreign subjects; and they are still aggressive and propagandist, enlarging the dominion of their arts and liberty. Their laws are hospitable, and slavery does not exist under them. What oppression exists is incidental and temporary; their success is not sudden or fortunate, but they have maintained constancy and self-equality for many ages.

Is this power due to their race, or to some other cause? Men hear gladly of the power of blood or race. Every body likes to know that his advantages cannot be attributed to air, soil, sea, or to local wealth, as mines and quarries, nor to laws and traditions, nor to fortune; but to superior brain, as it makes the praise more personal to him.

We anticipate in the doctrine of race something like that law of physiology that whatever bone, muscle, or essential organ is found in one healthy individual, the same part or organ may be found in or near the same place in its congener; and we look to find in the son every mental and moral property that existed in the ancestor. In race, it is not the broad shoulders,

or litheness, or stature that give advantage, but a symmetry that reaches as far as to the wit. Then the miracle and renown begin. Then first we care to examine the pedigree, and copy heedfully the training, — what food they ate, what nursing, school, and exercises they had, which resulted in this mother-wit, delicacy of thought and robust wisdom. How came such men as King Alfred, and Roger Bacon, William of Wykeham, Walter Raleigh, Philip Sidney, Isaac Newton, William Shakspeare, George Chapman, Francis Bacon, George Herbert, Henry Vane, to exist here? What made these delicate natures? was it the air? was it the sea? was it the parentage? For it is certain that these men are samples of their contemporaries. The hearing ear is always found close to the speaking tongue, and no genius can long or often utter any thing which is not invited and gladly entertained by men around him.

It is race, is it not, that puts the hundred millions of India under the dominion of a remote island in the north of Europe? Race avails much, if that be true which is alleged, that all Celts are Catholics and all Saxons are Protestants; that Celts love unity of power, and Saxons the representative principle. Race is a controll-

ing influence in the Jew, who, for two millenniums, under every climate, has preserved the same character and employments. Race in the negro is of appalling importance. The French in Canada, cut off from all intercourse with the parent people, have held their national traits. I chanced to read Tacitus On the Manners of the Germans, not long since, in Missouri and the heart of Illinois, and I found abundant points of resemblance between the Germans of the Hercynian forest, and our *Hoosiers*, *Suckers* and *Badgers* of the American woods.

But whilst race works immortally to keep its own, it is resisted by other forces. Civilization is a re-agent, and eats away the old traits. The Arabs of to-day are the Arabs of Pharaoh; but the Briton of to-day is a very different person from Cassibelaunus or Ossian.[1] Each religious sect has its physiognomy. The Methodists have acquired a face; the Quakers, a face; the nuns, a face. An Englishman will pick out a dissenter by his manners. Trades and professions carve their own lines on face and form. Certain circumstances of English life are not less effective; as personal liberty; plenty of food; good ale and mutton; open market, or good wages for every kind of labor; high bribes to

talent and skill; the island life, or the million opportunities and outlets for expanding and misplaced talent; readiness of combination among themselves for politics or for business; strikes;[1] and sense of superiority founded on habit of victory in labor and in war: and the appetite for superiority grows by feeding.

It is easy to add to the counteracting forces to race. Credence is a main element. 'T is said that the views of nature held by any people determine all their institutions. Whatever influences add to mental or moral faculty, take men out of nationality as out of other conditions, and make the national life a culpable compromise.

These limitations of the formidable doctrine of race suggest others which threaten to undermine it, as not sufficiently based. The fixity or inconvertibleness of races as we see them is a weak argument for the eternity of these frail boundaries, since all our historical period is a point to the duration in which nature has wrought.[2] Any the least and solitariest fact in our natural history, such as the melioration of fruits and of animal stocks, has the worth of a *power* in the opportunity of geologic periods. Moreover, though we flatter the self-love of men and nations by the legend of pure races,

all our experience is of the gradation and resolution of races, and strange resemblances meet us everywhere. It need not puzzle us that Malay and Papuan, Celt and Roman, Saxon and Tartar should mix, when we see the rudiments of tiger and baboon in our human form, and know that the barriers of races are not so firm but that some spray sprinkles us from the antediluvian seas.

The low organizations are simplest; a mere mouth, a jelly, or a straight worm. As the scale mounts, the organizations become complex. We are piqued with pure descent, but nature loves inoculation. A child blends in his face the faces of both parents and some feature from every ancestor whose face hangs on the wall. The best nations are those most widely related; and navigation, as effecting a world-wide mixture, is the most potent advancer of nations.

The English composite character betrays a mixed origin. Everything English is a fusion of distant and antagonistic elements.[1] The language is mixed; the names of men are of different nations, — three languages, three or four nations; — the currents of thought are counter: contemplation and practical skill; active intellect and dead conservatism; world-wide

enterprise and devoted use and wont; aggressive freedom and hospitable law with bitter class-legislation; a people scattered by their wars and affairs over the face of the whole earth, and homesick to a man; a country of extremes, — dukes and chartists, Bishops of Durham and naked heathen colliers; — nothing can be praised in it without damning exceptions, and nothing denounced without salvos of cordial praise.

Neither do this people appear to be of one stem, but collectively a better race than any from which they are derived. Nor is it easy to trace it home to its original seats. Who can call by right names what races are in Britain? Who can trace them historically? Who can discriminate them anatomically, or metaphysically?

In the impossibility of arriving at satisfaction on the historical question of race, and — come of whatever disputable ancestry — the indisputable Englishman before me, himself very well marked, and nowhere else to be found, — I fancied I could leave quite aside the choice of a tribe as his lineal progenitors. Defoe said in his wrath, "the Englishman was the mud of all races." I incline to the belief that, as water, lime and sand make mortar, so certain temperaments marry well, and, by well-managed contrarieties, develop as

drastic a character as the English. On the whole it is not so much a history of one or of certain tribes of Saxons, Jutes, or Frisians, coming from one place and genetically identical, as it is an anthology of temperaments out of them all. Certain temperaments suit the sky and soil of England, say eight or ten or twenty varieties, as, out of a hundred pear-trees, eight or ten suit the soil of an orchard and thrive, — whilst all the unadapted temperaments die out.

The English derive their pedigree from such a range of nationalities that there needs sea-room and land-room to unfold the varieties of talent and character. Perhaps the ocean serves as a galvanic battery, to distribute acids at one pole and alkalies at the other. So England tends to accumulate her liberals in America, and her conservatives at London. The Scandinavians in her race still hear in every age the murmurs of their mother, the ocean ; the Briton in the blood hugs the homestead still.

Again, as if to intensate the influences that are not of race, what we think of when we talk of English traits really narrows itself to a small district. It excludes Ireland and Scotland and Wales, and reduces itself at last to London, that is, to those who come and go thither. The por-

traits that hang on the walls in the Academy Exhibition at London, the figures in Punch's drawings of the public men or of the club-houses, the prints in the shop-windows, are distinctive English, and not American, no, nor Scotch, nor Irish: but 't is a very restricted nationality. As you go north into the manufacturing and agricultural districts, and to the population that never travels; as you go into Yorkshire, as you enter Scotland, the world's Englishman is no longer found. In Scotland there is a rapid loss of all grandeur of mien and manners; a provincial eagerness and acuteness appear; the poverty of the country makes itself remarked, and a coarseness of manners; and, among the intellectual, is the insanity of dialectics.[1] In Ireland are the same climate and soil as in England, but less food, no right relation to the land, political dependence, small tenantry and an inferior or misplaced race.

These queries concerning ancestry and blood may be well allowed, for there is no prosperity that seems more to depend on the kind of man than British prosperity. Only a hardy and wise people could have made this small territory great. We say, in a regatta or yacht-race, that if the boats are anywhere nearly matched, it is

the man that wins. Put the best sailing-master into either boat, and he will win.

Yet it is fine for us to speculate in face of unbroken traditions, though vague and losing themselves in fable. The traditions have got footing, and refuse to be disturbed. The kitchen-clock is more convenient than sidereal time. We must use the popular category, as we do the Linnæan classification, for convenience, and not as exact and final. Otherwise we are presently confounded when the best-settled traits of one race are claimed by some new ethnologist as precisely characteristic of the rival tribe.

I found plenty of well-marked English types, the ruddy complexion fair and plump, robust men, with faces cut like a die, and a strong island speech and accent; a Norman type, with the complacency that belongs to that constitution. Others who might be Americans, for any thing that appeared in their complexion or form; and their speech was much less marked and their thought much less bound. We will call them Saxons. Then the Roman has implanted his dark complexion in the trinity or quaternity of bloods.

1. The sources from which tradition derives their stock are mainly three. And first they are

of the oldest blood of the world, — the Celtic. Some peoples are deciduous or transitory. Where are the Greeks? Where the Etrurians? Where the Romans? But the Celts or Sidonides are an old family, of whose beginning there is no memory, and their end is likely to be still more remote in the future; for they have endurance and productiveness. They planted Britain, and gave to the seas and mountains names which are poems and imitate the pure voices of nature. They are favorably remembered in the oldest records of Europe. They had no violent feudal tenure, but the husbandman owned the land. They had an alphabet, astronomy, priestly culture and a sublime creed.[1] They have a hidden and precarious genius. They made the best popular literature of the Middle Ages in the songs of Merlin and the tender and delicious mythology of Arthur.

2. The English come mainly from the Germans, whom the Romans found hard to conquer in two hundred and ten years, — say impossible to conquer, when one remembers the long sequel; — a people about whom in the old empire the rumor ran there was never any that meddled with them that repented it not.[2]

3. Charlemagne, halting one day in a town

of Narbonnese Gaul, looked out of a window and saw a fleet of Northmen cruising in the Mediterranean. They even entered the port of the town where he was, causing no small alarm and sudden manning and arming of his galleys. As they put out to sea again, the emperor gazed long after them, his eyes bathed in tears. "I am tormented with sorrow," he said, "when I foresee the evils they will bring on my posterity." There was reason for these Xerxes' tears. The men who have built a ship and invented the rig, cordage, sail, compass and pump; the working in and out of port, have acquired much more than a ship.[1] Now arm them and every shore is at their mercy. For if they have not numerical superiority where they anchor, they have only to sail a mile or two to find it. Bonaparte's art of war, namely of concentrating force on the point of attack, must always be theirs who have the choice of the battle-ground. Of course they come into the fight from a higher ground of power than the land-nations; and can engage them on shore with a victorious advantage in the retreat. As soon as the shores are sufficiently peopled to make piracy a losing business, the same skill and courage are ready for the service of trade.

The Heimskringla,[1] or Sagas of the Kings of Norway, collected by Snorro Sturleson, is the Iliad and Odyssey of English history. Its portraits, like Homer's, are strongly individualized. The Sagas describe a monarchical republic like Sparta. The government disappears before the importance of citizens. In Norway, no Persian masses fight and perish to aggrandize a king, but the actors are bonders or landholders, every one of whom is named and personally and patronymically described, as the king's friend and companion. A sparse population gives this high worth to every man. Individuals are often noticed as very handsome persons, which trait only brings the story nearer to the English race. Then the solid material interest predominates, so dear to English understanding, wherein the association is logical, between merit and land. The heroes of the Sagas are not the knights of South Europe. No vaporing of France and Spain has corrupted them. They are substantial farmers whom the rough times have forced to defend their properties. They have weapons which they use in a determined manner, by no means for chivalry, but for their acres. They are people considerably advanced in rural arts, living amphibiously on a rough coast, and draw-

ing half their food from the sea and half from the land. They have herds of cows, and malt, wheat, bacon, butter and cheese. They fish in the fiord and hunt the deer. A king among these farmers has a varying power, sometimes not exceeding the authority of a sheriff. A king was maintained, much as in some of our country districts a winter-schoolmaster is quartered, a week here, a week there, and a fortnight on the next farm, — on all the farms in rotation. This the king calls going into guest-quarters; and it was the only way in which, in a poor country, a poor king with many retainers could be kept alive when he leaves his own farm to collect his dues through the kingdom.

These Norsemen are excellent persons in the main, with good sense, steadiness, wise speech and prompt action. But they have a singular turn for homicide; their chief end of man is to murder or to be murdered; oars, scythes, harpoons, crowbars, peat-knives and hay-forks are tools valued by them all the more for their charming aptitude for assassinations. A pair of kings, after dinner, will divert themselves by thrusting each his sword through the other's body, as did Yngve and Alf. Another pair ride out on a morning for a frolic, and finding no

weapon near, will take the bits out of their horses' mouths and crush each other's heads with them, as did Alric and Eric. The sight of a tent-cord or a cloak-string puts them on hanging somebody, a wife, or a husband, or, best of all, a king. If a farmer has so much as a hay-fork, he sticks it into a King Dag. King Ingiald finds it vastly amusing to burn up half a dozen kings in a hall, after getting them drunk. Never was poor gentleman so surfeited with life, so furious to be rid of it, as the Northman. If he cannot pick any other quarrel, he will get himself comfortably gored by a bull's horns, like Egil, or slain by a land-slide, like the agricultural King Onund. Odin died in his bed, in Sweden; but it was a proverb of ill condition to die the death of old age. King Hake of Sweden cuts and slashes in battle, as long as he can stand, then orders his war-ship, loaded with his dead men and their weapons, to be taken out to sea, the tiller shipped and the sails spread; being left alone he sets fire to some tar-wood and lies down contented on deck. The wind blew off the land, the ship flew, burning in clear flame, out between the islets into the ocean, and there was the right end of King Hake.

The early Sagas are sanguinary and piratical;

the later are of a noble strain. History rarely yields us better passages than the conversation between King Sigurd the Crusader and King Eystein his brother, on their respective merits, — one the soldier, and the other a lover of the arts of peace.[1]

But the reader of the Norman history must steel himself by holding fast the remote compensations which result from animal vigor. As the old fossil world shows that the first steps of reducing the chaos were confided to saurians and other huge and horrible animals, so the foundations of the new civility were to be laid by the most savage men.

The Normans came out of France into England worse men than they went into it one hundred and sixty years before. They had lost their own language and learned the Romance or barbarous Latin of the Gauls, and had acquired, with the language, all the vices it had names for. The conquest has obtained in the chronicles the name of the "memory of sorrow." Twenty thousand thieves landed at Hastings. These founders of the House of Lords were greedy and ferocious dragoons, sons of greedy and ferocious pirates. They were all alike, they took everything they could carry, they burned, harried,

violated, tortured and killed, until everything English was brought to the verge of ruin. Such however is the illusion of antiquity and wealth, that decent and dignified men now existing boast their descent from these filthy thieves, who showed a far juster conviction of their own merits, by assuming for their types the swine, goat, jackal, leopard, wolf and snake, which they severally resembled.[1]

England yielded to the Danes and Northmen in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and was the receptacle into which all the mettle of that strenuous population was poured. The continued draught of the best men in Norway, Sweden and Denmark to these piratical expeditions exhausted those countries, like a tree which bears much fruit when young, and these have been second-rate powers ever since. The power of the race migrated and left Norway void. King Olaf said, "When King Harold, my father, went westward to England, the chosen men in Norway followed him; but Norway was so emptied then, that such men have not since been to find in the country, nor especially such a leader as King Harold was for wisdom and bravery."

It was a tardy recoil of these invasions, when,

in 1801, the British government sent Nelson to bombard the Danish forts in the Sound, and, in 1807, Lord Cathcart, at Copenhagen, took the entire Danish fleet, as it lay in the basins, and all the equipments from the Arsenal, and carried them to England. Konghelle, the town where the kings of Norway, Sweden and Denmark were wont to meet, is now rented to a private English gentleman for a hunting ground.

It took many generations to trim and comb and perfume the first boat-load of Norse pirates into royal highnesses and most noble Knights of the Garter; but every sparkle of ornament dates back to the Norse boat. There will be time enough to mellow this strength into civility and religion. It is a medical fact that the children of the blind see; the children of felons have a healthy conscience. Many a mean, dastardly boy is, at the age of puberty, transformed into a serious and generous youth.[1]

The mildness of the following ages has not quite effaced these traits of Odin; as the rudiment of a structure matured in the tiger is said to be still found unabsorbed in the Caucasian man. The nation has a tough, acrid, animal nature, which centuries of churching and civilizing have not been able to sweeten. Alfieri said

"the crimes of Italy were the proof of the superiority of the stock;" and one may say of England that this watch moves on a splinter of adamant. The English uncultured are a brutal nation. The crimes recorded in their calendars leave nothing to be desired in the way of cold malignity. Dear to the English heart is a fair stand-up fight. The brutality of the manners in the lower class appears in the boxing, bear-baiting, cock-fighting, love of executions, and in the readiness for a set-to in the streets, delightful to the English of all classes. The costermongers of London streets hold cowardice in loathing: — "we must work our fists well; we are all handy with our fists." The public schools are charged with being bear-gardens of brutal strength, and are liked by the people for that cause. The fagging is a trait of the same quality. Medwin, in the Life of Shelley, relates that at a military school they rolled up a young man in a snowball, and left him so in his room while the other cadets went to church; — and crippled him for life. They have retained impressment, deck-flogging, army-flogging and school-flogging. Such is the ferocity of the army discipline that a soldier, sentenced to flogging, sometimes prays that his sentence may be commuted to

death. Flogging, banished from the armies of Western Europe, remains here by the sanction of the Duke of Wellington. The right of the husband to sell the wife has been retained down to our times. The Jews have been the favorite victims of royal and popular persecution. Henry III. mortgaged all the Jews in the kingdom to his brother the Earl of Cornwall, as security for money which he borrowed. The torture of criminals, and the rack for extorting evidence, were slowly disused. Of the criminal statutes, Sir Samuel Romilly said, "I have examined the codes of all nations, and ours is the worst, and worthy of the Anthropophagi."[1] In the last session (1848), the House of Commons was listening to the details of flogging and torture practised in the jails.[2]

As soon as this land, thus geographically posted, got a hardy people into it, they could not help becoming the sailors and factors of the globe. From childhood, they dabbled in water, they swam like fishes, their playthings were boats. In the case of the ship-money, the judges delivered it for law, that "England being an island, the very midland shires therein are all to be accounted maritime;" and Fuller adds, "the genius even of landlocked counties driving the

natives with a maritime dexterity." As early as the conquest it is remarked, in explanation of the wealth of England, that its merchants trade to all countries.

The English at the present day have great vigor of body and endurance. Other countrymen look slight and undersized beside them, and invalids. They are bigger men than the Americans. I suppose a hundred English taken at random out of the street would weigh a fourth more than so many Americans. Yet, I am told, the skeleton is not larger. They are round, ruddy and handsome; at least the whole bust is well formed, and there is a tendency to stout and powerful frames. I remarked the stoutness on my first landing at Liverpool; porter, drayman, coachman, guard, — what substantial, respectable, grandfatherly figures, with costume and manners to suit. The American has arrived at the old mansion-house and finds himself among uncles, aunts and grandsires. The pictures on the chimney-tiles of his nursery were pictures of these people. Here they are in the identical costumes and air which so took him.

It is the fault of their forms that they grow stocky, and the women have that disadvantage, — few tall, slender figures of flowing shape, but

stunted and thickset persons. The French say that the Englishwomen have two left hands. But in all ages they are a handsome race. The bronze monuments of crusaders lying cross-legged in the Temple Church at London, and those in Worcester and in Salisbury cathedrals, which are seven hundred years old, are of the same type as the best youthful heads of men now in England;—please by beauty of the same character, an expression blending good-nature, valor and refinement, and mainly by that uncorrupt youth in the face of manhood, which is daily seen in the streets of London.

Both branches of the Scandinavian race are distinguished for beauty. The anecdote of the handsome captives which Saint Gregory found at Rome, A. D. 600, is matched by the testimony of the Norman chroniclers, five centuries later, who wondered at the beauty and long flowing hair of the young English captives. Meantime the Heimskringla has frequent occasion to speak of the personal beauty of its heroes. When it is considered what humanity, what resources of mental and moral power the traits of the blonde race betoken, its accession to empire marks a new and finer epoch, wherein the old mineral force shall be subjugated at last by

humanity and shall plough in its furrow henceforward. It is not a final race, once a crab always crab, — but a race with a future.

On the English face are combined decision and nerve with the fair complexion, blue eyes and open and florid aspect. Hence the love of truth, hence the sensibility, the fine perception and poetic construction. The fair Saxon man, with open front and honest meaning, domestic, affectionate, is not the wood out of which cannibal, or inquisitor, or assassin is made, but he is moulded for law, lawful trade, civility, marriage, the nurture of children, for colleges, churches, charities and colonies.

They are rather manly than warlike. When the war is over, the mask falls from the affectionate and domestic tastes, which make them women in kindness. This union of qualities is fabled in their national legend of "Beauty and the Beast," or, long before, in the Greek legend of Hermaphrodite. The two sexes are co-present in the English mind. I apply to Britannia, queen of seas and colonies, the words in which her latest novelist portrays his heroine; "She is as mild as she is game, and as game as she is mild." The English delight in the antagonism which combines in one person the extremes of

courage and tenderness. Nelson, dying at Trafalgar, sends his love to Lord Collingwood, and like an innocent schoolboy that goes to bed, says "Kiss me, Hardy," and turns to sleep. Lord Collingwood, his comrade, was of a nature the most affectionate and domestic. Admiral Rodney's figure approached to delicacy and effeminacy, and he declared himself very sensible to fear, which he surmounted only by considerations of honor and public duty. Clarendon says the Duke of Buckingham was so modest and gentle, that some courtiers attempted to put affronts on him, until they found that this modesty and effeminacy was only a mask for the most terrible determination. And Sir Edward Parry said of Sir John Franklin, that "if he found Wellington Sound open, he explored it; for he was a man who never turned his back on a danger, yet of that tenderness that he would not brush away a mosquito." Even for their highwaymen the same virtue is claimed, and Robin Hood comes described to us as *mitissimus prædonum;* the gentlest thief. But they know where their war-dogs lie. Cromwell, Blake, Marlborough, Chatham, Nelson and Wellington are not to be trifled with, and the brutal strength which lies at the bottom of

society, the animal ferocity of the quays and cockpits, the bullies of the costermongers of Shoreditch, Seven Dials and Spitalfields, they know how to wake up.

They have a vigorous health and last well into middle and old age. The old men are as red as roses, and still handsome. A clear skin, a peach-bloom complexion and good teeth are found all over the island. They use a plentiful and nutritious diet. The operative cannot subsist on water-cresses. Beef, mutton, wheat-bread and malt-liquors are universal among the first-class laborers. Good feeding is a chief point of national pride among the vulgar, and in their caricatures they represent the Frenchman as a poor, starved body. It is curious that Tacitus found the English beer already in use among the Germans: "They make from barley or wheat a drink corrupted into some resemblance to wine." Lord Chief Justice Fortescue, in Henry VI.'s time, says, "The inhabitants of England drink no water, unless at certain times on a religious score and by way of penance." The extremes of poverty and ascetic penance, it would seem, never reach cold water in England. Wood the antiquary, in describing the poverty and mace-ration of Father Lacey, an English Jesuit, does

not deny him beer. He says, "His bed was under a thatching, and the way to it up a ladder; his fare was coarse; his drink, of a penny a gawn, or gallon."

They have more constitutional energy than any other people. They think, with Henri Quatre, that manly exercises are the foundation of that elevation of mind which gives one nature ascendant over another; or with the Arabs, that the days spent in the chase are not counted in the length of life. They box, run, shoot, ride, row, and sail from pole to pole. They eat and drink, and live jolly in the open air, putting a bar of solid sleep between day and day.[1] They walk and ride as fast as they can, their head bent forward, as if urged on some pressing affair. The French say that Englishmen in the street always walk straight before them like mad dogs. Men and women walk with infatuation. As soon as he can handle a gun, hunting is the fine art of every Englishman of condition. They are the most voracious people of prey that ever existed. Every season turns out the aristocracy into the country to shoot and fish. The more vigorous run out of the island to America, to Asia, to Africa and Australia, to hunt with fury by gun, by trap, by harpoon, by lasso, with dog, with

horse, with elephant or with dromedary, all the game that is in nature. These men have written the game-books of all countries, as Hawker, Scrope, Murray, Herbert, Maxwell, Cumming and a host of travellers. The people at home are addicted to boxing, running, leaping and rowing matches.

I suppose the dogs and horses must be thanked for the fact that the men have muscles almost as tough and supple as their own. If in every efficient man there is first a fine animal, in the English race it is of the best breed, a wealthy, juicy, broad-chested creature, steeped in ale and good cheer and a little overloaded by his flesh. Men of animal nature rely, like animals, on their instincts. The Englishman associates well with dogs and horses. His attachment to the horse arises from the courage and address required to manage it. The horse finds out who is afraid of it, and does not disguise its opinion. Their young boiling clerks and lusty collegians like the company of horses better than the company of professors. I suppose the horses are better company for them. The horse has more uses than Buffon noted. If you go into the streets, every driver in 'bus or dray is a bully, and if I wanted a good troop of soldiers,

I should recruit among the stables. Add a certain degree of refinement to the vivacity of these riders, and you obtain the precise quality which makes the men and women of polite society formidable.

They come honestly by their horsemanship, with *Hengst* and *Horsa* for their Saxon founders. The other branch of their race had been Tartar nomads. The horse was all their wealth. The children were fed on mares' milk. The pastures of Tartary were still remembered by the tenacious practice of the Norsemen to eat horseflesh at religious feasts. In the Danish invasions the marauders seized upon horses where they landed, and were at once converted into a body of expert cavalry.

At one time this skill seems to have declined. Two centuries ago the English horse never performed any eminent service beyond the seas; and the reason assigned was that the genius of the English hath always more inclined them to foot-service, as pure and proper manhood, without any mixture; whilst in a victory on horseback, the credit ought to be divided betwixt the man and his horse. But in two hundred years a change has taken place.[1] Now, they boast that they understand horses better than any other

people in the world, and that their horses are become their second selves.

"William the Conqueror being," says Camden, "better affected to beasts than to men, imposed heavy fines and punishments on those that should meddle with his game." The Saxon Chronicle says "he loved the tall deer as if he were their father." And rich Englishmen have followed his example, according to their ability, ever since, in encroaching on the tillage and commons with their game-preserves. It is a proverb in England that it is safer to shoot a man than a hare. The severity of the game-laws certainly indicates an extravagant sympathy of the nation with horses and hunters. The gentlemen are always on horseback, and have brought horses to an ideal perfection; the English racer is a factitious breed. A score or two of mounted gentlemen may frequently be seen running like centaurs down a hill nearly as steep as the roof of a house. Every inn-room is lined with pictures of races; telegraphs communicate, every hour, tidings of the heats from Newmarket and Ascot; and the House of Commons adjourns over the "Derby Day."

CHAPTER V

ABILITY

THE Saxon and the Northman are both Scandinavians. History does not allow us to fix the limits of the application of these names with any accuracy, but from the residence of a portion of these people in France, and from some effect of that powerful soil on their blood and manners, the Norman has come popularly to represent in England the aristocratic, and the Saxon the democratic principle. And though, I doubt not, the nobles are of both tribes, and the workers of both, yet we are forced to use the names a little mythically, one to represent the worker and the other the enjoyer.

The island was a prize for the best race. Each of the dominant races tried its fortune in turn. The Phœnician, the Celt and the Goth had already got in. The Roman came, but in the very day when his fortune culminated. He looked in the eyes of a new people that was to supplant his own. He disembarked his legions, erected his camps and towers, — presently he heard bad news from Italy, and worse and worse, every year; at last, he made a handsome com-

pliment of roads and walls, and departed. But the Saxon seriously settled in the land, builded, tilled, fished and traded, with German truth and adhesiveness. The Dane came and divided with him. Last of all the Norman or French-Dane arrived, and formally conquered, harried and ruled the kingdom. A century later it came out that the Saxon had the most bottom and longevity, had managed to make the victor speak the language and accept the law and usage of the victim; forced the baron to dictate Saxon terms to Norman kings; and, step by step, got all the essential securities of civil liberty invented and confirmed. The genius of the race and the genius of the place conspired to this effect. The island is lucrative to free labor, but not worth possession on other terms. The race was so intellectual that a feudal or military tenure could not last longer than the war. The power of the Saxon-Danes, so thoroughly beaten in the war that the name of English and villein were synonymous, yet so vivacious as to extort charters from the kings, stood on the strong personality of these people. Sense and economy must rule in a world which is made of sense and economy, and the banker, with his seven per cent., drives the earl out of his castle. A nobility of sol-

diers cannot keep down a commonalty of shrewd scientific persons. What signifies a pedigree of a hundred links, against a cotton-spinner with steam in his mill; or against a company of broad-shouldered Liverpool merchants, for whom Stephenson and Brunel are contriving locomotives and a tubular bridge?[1]

These Saxons are the hands of mankind. They have the taste for toil, a distaste for pleasure or repose, and the telescopic appreciation of distant gain. They are the wealth-makers, — and by dint of mental faculty which has its own conditions. The Saxon works after liking, or only for himself; and to set him at work and to begin to draw his monstrous values out of barren Britain, all dishonor, fret and barrier must be removed, and then his energies begin to play.

The Scandinavian fancied himself surrounded by Trolls, — a kind of goblin men with vast power of work and skilful production, — divine stevedores, carpenters, reapers, smiths and masons, swift to reward every kindness done them, with gifts of gold and silver. In all English history this dream comes to pass. Certain Trolls or working brains, under the names of Alfred, Bede, Caxton, Bracton, Camden, Drake, Sel-

den, Dugdale, Newton, Gibbon, Brindley, Watt, Wedgwood, dwell in the troll-mounts of Britain and turn the sweat of their face to power and renown.[1]

If the race is good, so is the place. Nobody landed on this spellbound island with impunity. The enchantments of barren shingle and rough weather transformed every adventurer into a laborer. Each vagabond that arrived bent his neck to the yoke of gain, or found the air too tense for him. The strong survived, the weaker went to the ground. Even the pleasure-hunters and sots of England are of a tougher texture. A hard temperament had been formed by Saxon and Saxon-Dane, and such of these French or Normans as could reach it were naturalized in every sense.

All the admirable expedients or means hit upon in England must be looked at as growths or irresistible offshoots of the expanding mind of the race. A man of that brain thinks and acts thus; and his neighbor, being afflicted with the same kind of brain, though he is rich and called a baron or a duke, thinks the same thing, and is ready to allow the justice of the thought and act in his retainer or tenant, though sorely against his baronial or ducal will.

The island was renowned in antiquity for its breed of mastiffs, so fierce that when their teeth were set you must cut their heads off to part them. The man was like his dog. The people have that nervous bilious temperament which is known by medical men to resist every means employed to make its possessor subservient to the will of others. The English game is main force to main force, the planting of foot to foot, fair play and open field, — a rough tug without trick or dodging, till one or both come to pieces. King Ethelwald spoke the language of his race when he planted himself at Wimborne and said he "would do one of two things, or there live, or there lie." They hate craft and subtlety. They neither poison, nor waylay, nor assassinate; and when they have pounded each other to a poultice, they will shake hands and be friends for the remainder of their lives.

You shall trace these Gothic touches at school, at country fairs, at the hustings and in parliament. No artifice, no breach of truth and plain dealing, — not so much as secret ballot, is suffered in the island. In parliament, the tactics of the opposition is to resist every step of the government by a pitiless attack: and in a bargain, no prospect of advantage is so dear to the

merchant as the thought of being tricked is mortifying.

Sir Kenelm Digby, a courtier of Charles and James, who won the sea-fight of Scanderoon, was a model Englishman in his day. "His person was handsome and gigantic, he had so graceful elocution and noble address, that, had he been dropt out of the clouds in any part of the world, he would have made himself respected: he was skilled in six tongues, and master of arts and arms." [1] Sir Kenelm wrote a book, Of Bodies and of Souls, in which he propounds, that "syllogisms do breed, or rather are all the variety of man's life. They are the steps by which we walk in all our businesses. Man, as he is man, doth nothing else but weave such chains. Whatsoever he doth, swarving from this work, he doth as deficient from the nature of man: and, if he do aught beyond this, by breaking out into divers sorts of exterior actions, he findeth, nevertheless, in this linked sequel of simple discourses, the art, the cause, the rule, the bounds and the model of it." [2]

There spoke the genius of the English people. There is a necessity on them to be logical. They would hardly greet the good that did not logically fall, — as if it excluded their own merit,

or shook their understandings. They are jealous of minds that have much facility of association, from an instinctive fear that the seeing many relations to their thought might impair this serial continuity and lucrative concentration. They are impatient of genius, or of minds addicted to contemplation, and cannot conceal their contempt for sallies of thought, however lawful, whose steps they cannot count by their wonted rule. Neither do they reckon better a syllogism that ends in syllogism. For they have a supreme eye to facts, and theirs is a logic that brings salt to soup, hammer to nail, oar to boat; the logic of cooks, carpenters and chemists, following the sequence of nature, and one on which words make no impression. Their mind is not dazzled by its own means, but locked and bolted to results. They love men who, like Samuel Johnson, a doctor in the schools, would jump out of his syllogism the instant his major proposition was in danger, to save that at all hazards. Their practical vision is spacious, and they can hold many threads without entangling them. All the steps they orderly take; but with the high logic of never confounding the minor and major proposition; keeping their eye on their aim, in all the com-

plicity and delay incident to the several series of means they employ. There is room in their minds for this and that, — a science of degrees. In the courts the independence of the judges and the loyalty of the suitors are equally excellent. In parliament they have hit on that capital invention of freedom, a constitutional opposition. And when courts and parliament are both deaf, the plaintiff is not silenced. Calm, patient, his weapon of defence from year to year is the obstinate reproduction of the grievance, with calculations and estimates. But, meantime, he is drawing numbers and money to his opinion, resolved that if all remedy fails, right of revolution is at the bottom of his charter-box. They are bound to see their measure carried, and stick to it through ages of defeat.

Into this English logic, however, an infusion of justice enters, not so apparent in other races; — a belief in the existence of two sides, and the resolution to see fair play. There is on every question an appeal from the assertion of the parties to the proof of what is asserted. They kiss the dust before a fact. Is it a machine, is it a charter, is it a boxer in the ring, is it a candidate on the hustings, — the universe of Englishmen will suspend their judgment until

the trial can be had. They are not to be led by a phrase, they want a working plan, a working machine, a working constitution, and will sit out the trial and abide by the issue and reject all preconceived theories. In politics they put blunt questions, which must be answered; Who is to pay the taxes? What will you do for trade? What for corn? What for the spinner?

This singular fairness and its results strike the French with surprise. Philip de Commines[1] says, "Now, in my opinion, among all the sovereignties I know in the world, that in which the public good is best attended to, and the least violence exercised on the people, is that of England." Life is safe, and personal rights; and what is freedom without security? whilst, in France, "fraternity," "equality," and "indivisible unity" are names for assassination. Montesquieu said, "England is the freest country in the world. If a man in England had as many enemies as hairs on his head, no harm would happen to him."

Their self-respect, their faith in causation, and their realistic logic or coupling of means to ends, have given them the leadership of the modern world. Montesquieu said, "No people have true common-sense but those who are born in

England." This common-sense is a perception of all the conditions of our earthly existence; of laws that can be stated, and of laws that cannot be stated, or that are learned only by practice, in which allowance for friction is made. They are impious in their skepticism of theory, and in high departments they are cramped and sterile. But the unconditional surrender to facts, and the choice of means to reach their ends, are as admirable as with ants and bees.

The bias of the nation is a passion for utility. They love the lever, the screw and pulley, the Flanders draught-horse, the waterfall, windmills, tide-mills; the sea and the wind to bear their freight ships. More than the diamond Koh-i-noor, which glitters among their crown jewels, they prize that dull pebble which is wiser than a man, whose poles turn themselves to the poles of the world, and whose axis is parallel to the axis of the world.' Now, their toys are steam and galvanism. They are heavy at the fine arts, but adroit at the coarse; not good in jewelry or mosaics, but the best iron-masters, colliers, woolcombers and tanners in Europe. They apply themselves to agriculture, to draining, to resisting encroachments of sea, wind, travelling sands, cold and wet sub-soil; to fishery, to manufac-

ture of indispensable staples, — salt, plumbago, leather, wool, glass, pottery and brick, — to bees and silkworms; — and by their steady combinations they succeed. A manufacturer sits down to dinner in a suit of clothes which was wool on a sheep's back at sunrise. You dine with a gentleman on venison, pheasant, quail, pigeons, poultry, mushrooms and pine-apples, all the growth of his estate. They are neat husbands for ordering all their tools pertaining to house and field. All are well kept. There is no want and no waste. They study use and fitness in their building, in the order of their dwellings and in their dress. The Frenchman invented the ruffle; the Englishman added the shirt. The Englishman wears a sensible coat buttoned to the chin, of rough but solid and lasting texture. If he is a lord, he dresses a little worse than a commoner. They have diffused the taste for plain substantial hats, shoes and coats through Europe. They think him the best dressed man whose dress is so fit for his use that you cannot notice or remember to describe it.

They secure the essentials in their diet, in their arts and manufactures. Every article of cutlery shows, in its shape, thought and long experience of workmen. They put the expense

in the right place, as, in their sea-steamers, in the solidity of the machinery and the strength of the boat.[1] The admirable equipment of their arctic ships carries London to the pole. They build roads, aqueducts; warm and ventilate houses. And they have impressed their directness and practical habit on modern civilization.

In trade, the Englishman believes that nobody breaks who ought not to break; and that if he do not make trade everything, it will make him nothing; and acts on this belief. The spirit of system, attention to details, and the subordination of details, or the not driving things too finely (which is charged on the Germans), constitute that dispatch of business which makes the mercantile power of England.

In war, the Englishman looks to his means. He is of the opinion of Civilis, his German ancestor, whom Tacitus reports as holding that "the gods are on the side of the strongest;" — a sentence which Bonaparte unconsciously translated, when he said that "he had noticed that Providence always favored the heaviest battalion." Their military science propounds that if the weight of the advancing column is greater than that of the resisting, the latter is destroyed. Therefore Wellington, when he came to the

army in Spain, had every man weighed, first with accoutrements, and then without; believing that the force of an army depended on the weight and power of the individual soldiers, in spite of cannon. Lord Palmerston told the House of Commons that more care is taken of the health and comfort of English troops than of any other troops in the world; and that hence the English can put more men into the rank, on the day of action, on the field of battle, than any other army. Before the bombardment of the Danish forts in the Baltic, Nelson spent day after day, himself, in the boats, on the exhausting service of sounding the channel. Clerk of Eldin's ' celebrated manœuvre of breaking the line of sea-battle, and Nelson's feat of *doubling*, or stationing his ships one on the outer bow, and another on the outer quarter of each of the enemy's, were only translations into naval tactics of Bonaparte's rule of concentration. Lord Collingwood was accustomed to tell his men that if they could fire three well-directed broadsides in five minutes, no vessel could resist them; and from constant practice they came to do it in three minutes and a half.

But conscious that no race of better men exists, they rely most on the simplest means, and

do not like ponderous and difficult tactics, but delight to bring the affair hand to hand;[1] where the victory lies with the strength, courage and endurance of the individual combatants. They adopt every improvement in rig, in motor, in weapons, but they fundamentally believe that the best stratagem in naval war is to lay your ship close alongside of the enemy's ship and bring all your guns to bear on him, until you or he go to the bottom. This is the old fashion, which never goes out of fashion, neither in nor out of England.

It is not usually a point of honor, nor a religious sentiment, and never any whim, that they will shed their blood for; but usually property, and right measured by property, that breeds revolution.[2] They have no Indian taste for a tomahawk-dance, no French taste for a badge or a proclamation. The Englishman is peaceably minding his business and earning his day's wages. But if you offer to lay hand on his day's wages, on his cow, or his right in common, or his shop, he will fight to the Judgment. Magna-charta, jury-trial, *habeas-corpus*, star-chamber, ship-money, Popery, Plymouth colony, American Revolution, are all questions involving a yeoman's right to his dinner, and

except as touching that, would not have lashed the British nation to rage and revolt.

Whilst they are thus instinct with a spirit of order and of calculation, it must be owned they are capable of larger views; but the indulgence is expensive to them, costs great crises, or accumulations of mental power. In common, the horse works best with blinders. Nothing is more in the line of English thought than our unvarnished Connecticut question, "Pray, sir, how do you get your living when you are at home?" The questions of freedom, of taxation, of privilege, are money questions. Heavy fellows, steeped in beer and fleshpots, they are hard of hearing and dim of sight. Their drowsy minds need to be flagellated by war and trade and politics and persecution. They cannot well read a principle, except by the light of fagots and of burning towns.

Tacitus says of the Germans, "Powerful only in sudden efforts, they are impatient of toil and labor." This highly destined race, if it had not somewhere added the chamber of patience to its brain, would not have built London. I know not from which of the tribes and temperaments that went to the composition of the people this tenacity was supplied, but they clinch every nail

they drive. They have no running for luck, and no immoderate speed. They spend largely on their fabric, and await the slow return. Their leather lies tanning seven years in the vat. At Rogers's mills, in Sheffield, where I was shown the process of making a razor and a penknife, I was told there is no luck in making good steel; that they make no mistakes, every blade in the hundred and in the thousand is good. And that is characteristic of all their work, — no more is attempted than is done.

When Thor and his companions arrive at Utgard, he is told that "nobody is permitted to remain here, unless he understand some art, and excel in it all other men." [1] The same question is still put to the posterity of Thor. A nation of laborers, every man is trained to some one art or detail and aims at perfection in that; not content unless he has something in which he thinks he surpasses all other men. He would rather not do anything at all than not do it well. I suppose no people have such thoroughness; — from the highest to the lowest, every man meaning to be master of his art.

"To show capacity," a Frenchman described as the end of a speech in debate: "No," said an Englishman, "but to set your shoulder at the

wheel, — to advance the business." Sir Samuel Romilly refused to speak in popular assemblies, confining himself to the House of Commons, where a measure can be carried by a speech. The business of the House of Commons is conducted by a few persons, but these are hard-worked. Sir Robert Peel "knew the Blue Books by heart." His colleagues and rivals carry Hansard[1] in their heads. The high civil and legal offices are not beds of ease, but posts which exact frightful amounts of mental labor. Many of the great leaders, like Pitt, Canning, Castlereagh, Romilly, are soon worked to death. They are excellent judges in England of a good worker, and when they find one, like Clarendon, Sir Philip Warwick, Sir William Coventry, Ashley, Burke, Thurlow, Mansfield, Pitt, Eldon, Peel, or Russell, there is nothing too good or too high for him.

They have a wonderful heat in the pursuit of a public aim. Private persons exhibit, in scientific and antiquarian researches, the same pertinacity as the nation showed in the coalitions in which it yoked Europe against the empire of Bonaparte, one after the other defeated, and still renewed, until the sixth hurled him from his seat.

Sir John Herschel, in completion of the work of his father, who had made the catalogue of the stars of the northern hemisphere, expatriated himself for years at the Cape of Good Hope, finished his inventory of the southern heaven, came home, and redacted it in eight years more; — a work whose value does not begin until thirty years have elapsed, and thenceforward a record to all ages of the highest import. The Admiralty sent out the Arctic expeditions year after year, in search of Sir John Franklin, until at last they have threaded their way through polar pack and Behring's Straits and solved the geographical problem. Lord Elgin, at Athens, saw the imminent ruin of the Greek remains, set up his scaffoldings, in spite of epigrams, and, after five years' labor to collect them, got his marbles on ship-board. The ship struck a rock and went to the bottom. He had them all fished up by divers, at a vast expense, and brought to London; not knowing that Haydon, Fuseli and Canova, and all good heads in all the world, were to be his applauders. In the same spirit, were the excavation and research by Sir Charles Fellowes for the Xanthian monument, and of Layard for his Nineveh sculptures.[1]

The nation sits in the immense city they have builded, a London extended into every man's mind, though he live in Van Dieman's Land or Capetown. Faithful performance of what is undertaken to be performed, they honor in themselves, and exact in others, as certificate of equality with themselves. The modern world is theirs. They have made and make it day by day. The commercial relations of the world are so intimately drawn to London, that every dollar on earth contributes to the strength of the English government. And if all the wealth in the planet should perish by war or deluge, they know themselves competent to replace it.

They have approved their Saxon blood, by their sea-going qualities; their descent from Odin's smiths, by their hereditary skill in working in iron; their British birth, by husbandry and immense wheat harvests; and justified their occupancy of the centre of habitable land, by their supreme ability and cosmopolitan spirit.[1] They have tilled, builded, forged, spun and woven. They have made the island a thoroughfare, and London a shop, a law-court, a record-office and scientific bureau, inviting to strangers; a sanctuary to refugees of every political and religious opinion; and such a city that almost

every active man, in any nation, finds himself at one time or other forced to visit it.

In every path of practical activity they have gone even with the best. There is no secret of war in which they have not shown mastery. The steam-chamber of Watt, the locomotive of Stephenson, the cotton-mule of Roberts, perform the labor of the world. There is no department of literature, of science, or of useful art, in which they have not produced a first-rate book. It is England whose opinion is waited for on the merit of a new invention, an improved science. And in the complications of the trade and politics of their vast empire, they have been equal to every exigency, with counsel and with conduct. Is it their luck, or is it in the chambers of their brain, — it is their commercial advantage that whatever light appears in better method or happy invention, breaks out *in their race.* They are a family to which a destiny attaches, and the Banshee[1] has sworn that a male heir shall never be wanting. They have a wealth of men to fill important posts, and the vigilance of party criticism insures the selection of a competent person.

A proof of the energy of the British people

is the highly artificial construction of the whole fabric. The climate and geography, I said, were factitious, as if the hands of man had arranged the conditions. The same character pervades the whole kingdom. Bacon said, "Rome was a state not subject to paradoxes;" but England subsists by antagonisms and contradictions. The foundations of its greatness are the rolling waves; and from first to last it is a museum of anomalies. This foggy and rainy country furnishes the world with astronomical observations. Its short rivers do not afford water-power, but the land shakes under the thunder of the mills. There is no gold-mine of any importance, but there is more gold in England than in all other countries. It is too far north for the culture of the vine, but the wines of all countries are in its docks. The French Comte de Lauraguais said, "No fruit ripens in England but a baked apple;" but oranges and pine-apples are as cheap in London as in the Mediterranean. The Mark-Lane Express, or the Custom House Returns, bear out to the letter the vaunt of Pope, —

> "Let India boast her palms, nor envy we
> The weeping amber, nor the spicy tree,
> While, by our oaks, those precious loads are borne,
> And realms commanded which those trees adorn."[1]

The native cattle are extinct, but the island is full of artificial breeds. The agriculturist Bakewell created sheep and cows and horses to order, and breeds in which every thing was omitted but what is economical. The cow is sacrificed to her bag, the ox to his sirloin. Stall-feeding makes sperm-mills of the cattle, and converts the stable to a chemical factory. The rivers, lakes and ponds, too much fished, or obstructed by factories, are artificially filled with the eggs of salmon, turbot and herring.

Chat Moss and the fens of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire are unhealthy and too barren to pay rent. By cylindrical tiles and gutta-percha tubes, five millions of acres of bad land have been drained and put on equality with the best, for rape-culture and grass. The climate too, which was already believed to have become milder and drier by the enormous consumption of coal, is so far reached by this new action, that fogs and storms are said to disappear. In due course, all England will be drained and rise a second time out of the waters. The latest step was to call in the aid of steam to agriculture. Steam is almost an Englishman. I do not know but they will send him to Parliament next, to make laws. He weaves, forges, saws, pounds,

fans, and now he must pump, grind, dig and plough for the farmer. The markets created by the manufacturing population have erected agriculture into a great thriving and spending industry. The value of the houses in Britain is equal to the value of the soil. Artificial aids of all kinds are cheaper than the natural resources. No man can afford to walk, when the parliamentary-train carries him for a penny a mile. Gas-burners are cheaper than daylight in numberless floors in the cities. All the houses in London buy their water. The English trade does not exist for the exportation of native products, but on its manufactures, or the making well every thing which is ill-made elsewhere. They make ponchos for the Mexican, bandannas for the Hindoo, ginseng for the Chinese, beads for the Indian, laces for the Flemings, telescopes for astronomers, cannons for kings.

The Board of Trade caused the best models of Greece and Italy to be placed within the reach of every manufacturing population. They caused to be translated from foreign languages and illustrated by elaborate drawings, the most approved works of Munich, Berlin and Paris. They have ransacked Italy to find new forms,

to add a grace to the products of their looms, their potteries and their foundries.[1]

The nearer we look, the more artificial is their social system. Their law is a network of fictions. Their property, a scrip or certificate of right to interest on money that no man ever saw. Their social classes are made by statute. Their ratios of power and representation are historical and legal. The last Reform-bill took away political power from a mound, a ruin and a stone wall, whilst Birmingham and Manchester, whose mills paid for the wars of Europe, had no representative.[2] Purity in the elective Parliament is secured by the purchase of seats.[3] Foreign power is kept by armed colonies; power at home, by a standing army of police. The pauper lives better than the free laborer, the thief better than the pauper, and the transported felon better than the one under imprisonment. The crimes are factitious; as smuggling, poaching, nonconformity, heresy and treason. The sovereignty of the seas is maintained by the impressment of seamen. "The impressment of seamen," said Lord Eldon,[4] "is the life of our navy." Solvency is maintained by means of a national debt, on the principle, "If you will not lend me the money, how can I pay you?" For the

administration of justice, Sir Samuel Romilly's expedient for clearing the arrears of business in Chancery was, the Chancellor's staying away entirely from his court. Their system of education is factitious. The Universities galvanize dead languages into a semblance of life. Their church is artificial. The manners and customs of society are artificial; — made-up men with made-up manners; — and thus the whole is Birminghamized, and we have a nation whose existence is a work of art; — a cold, barren, almost arctic isle being made the most fruitful, luxurious and imperial land in the whole earth.

Man in England submits to be a product of political economy. On a bleak moor a mill is built, a banking-house is opened, and men come in as water in a sluice-way, and towns and cities rise. Man is made as a Birmingham button. The rapid doubling of the population dates from Watt's steam-engine. A landlord who owns a province says, "The tenantry are unprofitable; let me have sheep." He unroofs the houses and ships the population to America.[1] The nation is accustomed to the instantaneous creation of wealth. It is the maxim of their economists, "that the greater part in value of the wealth now existing in England has been produced by

human hands within the last twelve months." Meantime, three or four days' rain will reduce hundreds to starving in London.

One secret of their power is their mutual good understanding. Not only good minds are born among them, but all the people have good minds. Every nation has yielded some good wit, if, as has chanced to many tribes, only one. But the intellectual organization of the English admits a communicableness of knowledge and ideas among them all. An electric touch by any of their national ideas, melts them into one family and brings the hoards of power which their individuality is always hiving, into use and play for all. Is it the smallness of the country, or is it the pride and affection of race, — they have solidarity, or responsibleness, and trust in each other.

Their minds, like wool, admit of a dye which is more lasting than the cloth. They embrace their cause with more tenacity than their life. Though not military, yet every common subject by the poll is fit to make a soldier of. These private, reserved, mute family-men can adopt a public end with all their heat, and this strength of affection makes the romance of their heroes. The difference of rank does not divide the na-

tional heart. The Danish poet Oehlenschläger complains that who writes in Danish writes to two hundred readers.[1] In Germany there is one speech for the learned, and another for the masses, to that extent that, it is said, no sentiment or phrase from the works of any great German writer is ever heard among the lower classes. But in England, the language of the noble is the language of the poor. In Parliament, in pulpits, in theatres, when the speakers rise to thought and passion, the language becomes idiomatic; the people in the street best understand the best words. And their language seems drawn from the Bible, the Common Law and the works of Shakspeare, Bacon, Milton, Pope, Young, Cowper, Burns and Scott. The island has produced two or three of the greatest men that ever existed, but they were not solitary in their own time. Men quickly embodied what Newton found out, in Greenwich observatories and practical navigation. The boys know all that Hutton[2] knew of strata, or Dalton of atoms, or Harvey of blood-vessels; and these studies, once dangerous, are in fashion. So what is invented or known in agriculture, or in trade, or in war, or in art, or in literature and antiquities. A great ability, not amassed on a few giants, but

poured into the general mind, so that each of them could at a pinch stand in the shoes of the other; and they are more bound in character than differenced in ability or in rank. The laborer is a possible lord. The lord is a possible basket-maker. Every man carries the English system in his brain, knows what is confided to him and does therein the best he can. The chancellor carries England on his mace, the midshipman at the point of his dirk, the smith on his hammer, the cook in the bowl of his spoon; the postilion cracks his whip for England, and the sailor times his oars to "God save the King!" The very felons have their pride in each other's English stanchness. In politics and in war they hold together as by hooks of steel. The charm in Nelson's history is the unselfish greatness, the assurance of being supported to the uttermost by those whom he supports to the uttermost. Whilst they are some ages ahead of the rest of the world in the art of living; whilst in some directions they do not represent the modern spirit but constitute it; — this vanguard of civility and power they coldly hold, marching in phalanx, lockstep, foot after foot, file after file of heroes, ten thousand deep.

CHAPTER VI

MANNERS

I FIND the Englishman to be him of all men who stands firmest in his shoes. They have in themselves what they value in their horses, — mettle and bottom. On the day of my arrival at Liverpool, a gentleman, in describing to me the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, happened to say, "Lord Clarendon has pluck like a cock and will fight till he dies;" and what I heard first I heard last, and the one thing the English value is *pluck*. The word is not beautiful, but on the quality they signify by it the nation is unanimous. The cabmen have it; the merchants have it; the bishops have it; the women have it; the journals have it; — the Times newspaper they say is the pluckiest thing in England, and Sydney Smith had made it a proverb that little Lord John Russell, the minister, would take the command of the Channel fleet to-morrow.

They require you to dare to be of your own opinion, and they hate the practical cowards who cannot in affairs answer directly yes or no. They dare to displease, nay, they will let you break all

the commandments, if you do it natively and with spirit. You must be somebody; then you may do this or that, as you will.

Machinery has been applied to all work, and carried to such perfection that little is left for the men but to mind the engines and feed the furnaces. But the machines require punctual service, and as they never tire, they prove too much for their tenders. Mines, forges, mills, breweries, railroads, steam-pump, steam-plough, drill of regiments, drill of police, rule of court and shop-rule have operated to give a mechanical regularity to all the habit and action of men. A terrible machine has possessed itself of the ground, the air, the men and women, and hardly even thought is free.

The mechanical might and organization requires in the people constitution and answering spirits; and he who goes among them must have some weight of metal. At last, you take your hint from the fury of life you find, and say, one thing is plain, this is no country for fainthearted people: don't creep about diffidently; make up your mind; take your own course, and you shall find respect and furtherance.

It requires, men say, a good constitution to travel in Spain. I say as much of England, for

other cause, simply on account of the vigor and brawn of the people. Nothing but the most serious business could give one any counterweight to these Baresarks, though they were only to order eggs and muffins for their breakfast. The Englishman speaks with all his body. His elocution is stomachic,—as the American's is labial. The Englishman is very petulant and precise about his accommodation at inns and on the roads; a quiddle about his toast and his chop and every species of convenience, and loud and pungent in his expressions of impatience at any neglect. His vivacity betrays itself at all points, in his manners, in his respiration, and the inarticulate noises he makes in clearing the throat; —all significant of burly strength. He has stamina; he can take the initiative in emergencies. He has that *aplomb* which results from a good adjustment of the moral and physical nature and the obedience of all the powers to the will; as if the axes of his eyes were united to his backbone, and only moved with the trunk.

This vigor appears in the incuriosity and stony neglect, each of every other. Each man walks, eats, drinks, shaves, dresses, gesticulates, and, in every manner acts and suffers without reference to the bystanders, in his own fashion, only care-

ful not to interfere with them or annoy them; not that he is trained to neglect the eyes of his neighbors, — he is really occupied with his own affair and does not think of them. Every man in this polished country consults only his convenience, as much as a solitary pioneer in Wisconsin. I know not where any personal eccentricity is so freely allowed, and no man gives himself any concern with it. An Englishman walks in a pouring rain, swinging his closed umbrella like a walking-stick; wears a wig, or a shawl, or a saddle, or stands on his head, and no remark is made. And as he has been doing this for several generations, it is now in the blood.

In short, every one of these islanders is an island himself, safe, tranquil, incommunicable. In a company of strangers you would think him deaf; his eyes never wander from his table and newspaper. He is never betrayed into any curiosity or unbecoming emotion. They have all been trained in one severe school of manners, and never put off the harness. He does not give his hand. He does not let you meet his eye. It is almost an affront to look a man in the face without being introduced. In mixed or in select companies they do not introduce persons; so that a presentation is a circumstance as valid as

a contract. Introductions are sacraments. He withholds his name. At the hotel, he is hardly willing to whisper it to the clerk at the book-office. If he give you his private address on a card, it is like an avowal of friendship; and his bearing, on being introduced, is cold, even though he is seeking your acquaintance and is studying how he shall serve you.

It was an odd proof of this impressive energy, that in my lectures I hesitated to read and threw out for its impertinence many a disparaging phrase which I had been accustomed to spin, about poor, thin, unable mortals; — so much had the fine physique and the personal vigor of this robust race worked on my imagination.

I happened to arrive in England at the moment of a commercial crisis. But it was evident that let who will fail, England will not. These people have sat here a thousand years, and here will continue to sit. They will not break up, or arrive at any desperate revolution, like their neighbors; for they have as much energy, as much continence of character as they ever had. The power and possession which surround them are their own creation, and they exert the same commanding industry at this moment.

They are positive, methodical, cleanly and

formal, loving routine and conventional ways; loving truth and religion, to be sure, but inexorable on points of form. All the world praises the comfort and private appointments of an English inn, and of English households. You are sure of neatness and of personal decorum. A Frenchman may possibly be clean; an Englishman is conscientiously clean. A certain order and complete propriety is found in his dress and in his belongings.

Born in a harsh and wet climate, which keeps him in doors whenever he is at rest, and being of an affectionate and loyal temper, he dearly loves his house. If he is rich, he buys a demesne and builds a hall; if he is in middle condition, he spares no expense on his house. Without, it is all planted; within, it is wainscoted, carved, curtained, hung with pictures and filled with good furniture. 'Tis a passion which survives all others, to deck and improve it. Hither he brings all that is rare and costly, and with the national tendency to sit fast in the same spot for many generations, it comes to be, in the course of time, a museum of heirlooms, gifts and trophies of the adventures and exploits of the family. He is very fond of silver plate, and though he have no gallery of portraits of his ancestors,

he has of their punch-bowls and porringers. Incredible amounts of plate are found in good houses, and the poorest have some spoon or saucepan, gift of a godmother, saved out of better times.

An English family consists of a few persons, who, from youth to age, are found revolving within a few feet of each other, as if tied by some invisible ligature, tense as that cartilage which we have seen attaching the two Siamese. England produces under favorable conditions of ease and culture the finest women in the world. And as the men are affectionate and true-hearted, the women inspire and refine them. Nothing can be more delicate without being fantastical, nothing more firm and based in nature and sentiment than the courtship and mutual carriage of the sexes. The song of 1596 says, "The wife of every Englishman is counted blest." The sentiment of Imogen in Cymbeline is copied from English nature; and not less the Portia of Brutus, the Kate Percy and the Desdemona. The romance does not exceed the height of noble passion in Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson,[1] or in Lady Russell, or even as one discerns through the plain prose of Pepys's Diary, the sacred habit of an English wife. Sir Samuel Romilly could not bear the

death of his wife. Every class has its noble and tender examples.

Domesticity is the taproot which enables the nation to branch wide and high. The motive and end of their trade and empire is to guard the independence and privacy of their homes. Nothing so much marks their manners as the concentration on their household ties. This domesticity is carried into court and camp. Wellington governed India and Spain and his own troops, and fought battles, like a good family-man, paid his debts, and though general of an army in Spain, could not stir abroad for fear of public creditors. This taste for house and parish merits has of course its doting and foolish side. Mr. Cobbett attributes the huge popularity of Perceval, prime minister in 1810, to the fact that he was wont to go to church every Sunday, with a large quarto gilt prayer-book under one arm, his wife hanging on the other, and followed by a long brood of children.

They keep their old customs, costumes, and pomps, their wig and mace, sceptre and crown. The Middle Ages still lurk in the streets of London. The Knights of the Bath take oath to defend injured ladies; the gold-stick-in-waiting survives. They repeated the ceremonies of the

eleventh century in the coronation of the present Queen. A hereditary tenure is natural to them. Offices, farms, trades and traditions descend so. Their leases run for a hundred and a thousand years. Terms of service and partnership are life-long, or are inherited. "Holdship has been with me," said Lord Eldon, "eight-and-twenty years, knows all my business and books." Antiquity of usage is sanction enough. Wordsworth says of the small freeholders of Westmoreland, "Many of these humble sons of the hills had a consciousness that the land which they tilled had for more than five hundred years been possessed by men of the same name and blood." The ship-carpenter in the public yards, my lord's gardener and porter, have been there for more than a hundred years, grandfather, father, and son.

The English power resides also in their dislike of change. They have difficulty in bringing their reason to act, and on all occasions use their memory first. As soon as they have rid themselves of some grievance and settled the better practice, they make haste to fix it as a finality, and never wish to hear of alteration more.

Every Englishman is an embryonic chancellor: his instinct is to search for a precedent. The favorite phrase of their law is, "a custom

whereof the memory of man runneth not back to the contrary." The barons say, "*Nolumus mutari;*" and the cockneys stifle the curiosity of the foreigner on the reason of any practice with "Lord, sir, it was always so." They hate innovation. Bacon told them, Time was the right reformer; Chatham, that "confidence was a plant of slow growth;" Canning, to "advance with the times;" and Wellington, that "habit was ten times nature." All their statesmen learn the irresistibility of the tide of custom, and have invented many fine phrases to cover this slowness of perception and prehensility of tail.

A sea-shell should be the crest of England, not only because it represents a power built on the waves, but also the hard finish of the men. The Englishman is finished like a cowry or a murex. After the spire and the spines are formed, or with the formation, a juice exudes and a hard enamel varnishes every part.[1] The keeping of the proprieties is as indispensable as clean linen. No merit quite countervails the want of this whilst this sometimes stands in lieu of all. "'T is in bad taste," is the most formidable word an Englishman can pronounce. But this japan costs them dear. There is a prose in certain Englishmen which exceeds in wooden deadness all rivalry

with other countrymen. There is a knell in the conceit and externality of their voice, which seems to say, *Leave all hope behind.* In this Gibraltar of propriety, mediocrity gets intrenched and consolidated and founded in adamant. An Englishman of fashion is like one of those souvenirs, bound in gold vellum, enriched with delicate engravings on thick hot-pressed paper, fit for the hands of ladies and princes, but with nothing in it worth reading or remembering.

A severe decorum rules the court and the cottage. When Thalberg the pianist was one evening performing before the Queen at Windsor, in a private party, the Queen accompanied him with her voice. The circumstance took air, and all England shuddered from sea to sea. The indecorum was never repeated. Cold, repressive manners prevail. No enthusiasm is permitted except at the opera. They avoid every thing marked. They require a tone of voice that excites no attention in the room. Sir Philip Sidney is one of the patron saints of England, of whom Wotton said, "His wit was the measure of congruity."

Pretension and vaporing are once for all distasteful. They keep to the other extreme of low tone in dress and manners. They avoid preten-

sion and go right to the heart of the thing. They hate nonsense, sentimentalism and high-flown expression; they use a studied plainness. Even Brummel, their fop, was marked by the severest simplicity in dress. They value themselves on the absence of every thing theatrical in the public business, and on conciseness and going to the point, in private affairs.

In an aristocratical country like England, not the Trial by Jury, but the dinner, is the capital institution. It is the mode of doing honor to a stranger, to invite him to eat, — and has been for many hundred years. "And they think," says the Venetian traveller of 1500, "no greater honor can be conferred or received, than to invite others to eat with them, or to be invited themselves, and they would sooner give five or six ducats to provide an entertainment for a person, than a groat to assist him in any distress."[1] It is reserved to the end of the day, the family-hour being generally six, in London, and if any company is expected, one or two hours later. Every one dresses for dinner, in his own house, or in another man's. The guests are expected to arrive within half an hour of the time fixed by card of invitation, and nothing but death or mutilation is permitted to detain them.[2] The English dinner is precisely

the model on which our own are constructed in the Atlantic cities. The company sit one or two hours before the ladies leave the table. The gentlemen remain over their wine an hour longer, and rejoin the ladies in the drawing-room and take coffee. The dress-dinner generates a talent of table-talk which reaches great perfection: the stories are so good that one is sure they must have been often told before, to have got such happy turns. Hither come all manner of clever projects, bits of popular science, of practical intervention, of miscellaneous humor; political, literary and personal news; railroads, horses, diamonds, agriculture, horticulture, pisciculture and wine.

English stories, *bon-mots* and the recorded table-talk of their wits, are as good as the best of the French. In America, we are apt scholars, but have not yet attained the same perfection: for the range of nations from which London draws, and the steep contrasts of condition, create the picturesque in society, as broken country makes picturesque landscape; whilst our prevailing equality makes a prairie tameness: and secondly, because the usage of a dress-dinner every day at dark has a tendency to hive and produce to advantage every thing good. Much

attrition has worn every sentence into a bullet. Also one meets now and then with polished men who know every thing, have tried every thing, and can do every thing, and are quite superior to letters and science. What could they not, if only they would?

CHAPTER VII

TRUTH

THE Teutonic tribes have a national singleness of heart, which contrasts with the Latin races. The German name has a proverbial significance of sincerity and honest meaning. The arts bear testimony to it. The faces of clergy and laity in old sculptures and illuminated missals are charged with earnest belief. Add to this hereditary rectitude the punctuality and precise dealing which commerce creates, and you have the English truth and credit.[1] The government strictly performs its engagements. The subjects do not understand trifling on its part. When any breach of promise occurred, in the old days of prerogative, it was resented by the people as an intolerable grievance. And in modern times, any slipperiness in the government of political faith, or any repudiation or crookedness in matters of finance, would bring the whole nation to a committee of inquiry and reform. Private men keep their promises, never so trivial. Down goes the flying word on the tablets, and is indelible as Domesday Book.

Their practical power rests on their national

sincerity. Veracity derives from instinct, and marks superiority in organization. Nature has endowed some animals with cunning, as a compensation for strength withheld; but it has provoked the malice of all others, as if avengers of public wrong. In the nobler kinds, where strength could be afforded, her races are loyal to truth, as truth is the foundation of the social state. Beasts that make no truce with man, do not break faith with each other. 'T is said that the wolf, who makes a *cache* of his prey and brings his fellows with him to the spot, if, on digging, it is not found, is instantly and unresistingly torn in pieces. English veracity seems to result on a sounder animal structure, as if they could afford it.[1] They are blunt in saying what they think, sparing of promises, and they require plain dealing of others. We will not have to do with a man in a mask. Let us know the truth. Draw a straight line, hit whom and where it will. Alfred, whom the affection of the nation makes the type of their race, is called by a writer at the Norman Conquest, the *truth-speaker; Alueredus veridicus*. Geoffrey of Monmouth says of King Aurelius, uncle of Arthur, that "above all things he hated a lie." The Northman Guttorm said to King Olaf, "It is royal work to

fulfil royal words." The mottoes of their families are monitory proverbs, as, *Fare fac*, — Say, do, — of the Fairfaxes; *Say and seal*, of the house of Fiennes; *Vero nil verius*, of the De Veres. To be king of their word is their pride. When they unmask cant, they say, "The English of this is," etc.; and to give the lie is the extreme insult. The phrase of the lowest of the people is "honor-bright," and their vulgar praise, "His word is as good as his bond." They hate shuffling and equivocation, and the cause is damaged in the public opinion, on which any paltering can be fixed. Even Lord Chesterfield, with his French breeding, when he came to define a gentleman, declared that truth made his distinction; and nothing ever spoken by him would find so hearty a suffrage from his nation. The Duke of Wellington, who had the best right to say so, advises the French General Kellermann that he may rely on the parole of an English officer. The English, of all classes, value themselves on this trait, as distinguishing them from the French, who, in the popular belief, are more polite than true. An Englishman understates, avoids the superlative, checks himself in compliments,[1] alleging that in the French language one cannot speak without lying.

They love reality in wealth, power, hospitality, and do not easily learn to make a show, and take the world as it goes. They are not fond of ornaments, and if they wear them, they must be gems. They read gladly in old Fuller' that a lady in the reign of Elizabeth "would have as patiently digested a lie, as the wearing of false stones or pendants of counterfeit pearl." They have the earth-hunger, or preference for property in land, which is said to mark the Teutonic nations. They build of stone: public and private buildings are massive and durable. In comparing their ships' houses and public offices with the American, it is commonly said that they spend a pound where we spend a dollar. Plain rich clothes, plain rich equipage, plain rich finish throughout their house and belongings mark the English truth.

They confide in each other, — English believes in English. The French feel the superiority of this probity. The Englishman is not springing a trap for his admiration, but is honestly minding his business. The Frenchman is vain. Madame de Staël says that the English irritated Napoleon, mainly because they have found out how to unite success with honesty. She was not aware how wide an application her foreign readers

would give to the remark. Wellington discovered the ruin of Bonaparte's affairs, by his own probity. He augured ill of the empire as soon as he saw that it was mendacious and lived by war.[1] If war do not bring in its sequel new trade, better agriculture and manufactures, but only games, fireworks and spectacles, — no prosperity could support it; much less a nation decimated for conscripts and out of pocket, like France. So he drudged for years on his military works at Lisbon, and from this base at last extended his gigantic lines to Waterloo, believing in his countrymen and their syllogisms above all the rhodomontade of Europe.[2]

At a St. George's festival, in Montreal, where I happened to be a guest since my return home, I observed that the chairman complimented his compatriots, by saying, "they confided that wherever they met an Englishman, they found a man who would speak the truth." And one cannot think this festival fruitless, if, all over the world, on the 23d of April, wherever two or three English are found, they meet to encourage each other in the nationality of veracity.

In the power of saying rude truth, sometimes in the lion's mouth, no men surpass them. On the king's birthday, when each bishop was ex-

pected to offer the king a purse of gold, Latimer gave Henry VIII. a copy of the Vulgate, with a mark at the passage, "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;" and they so honor stoutness in each other that the king passed it over. They are tenacious of their belief and cannot easily change their opinions to suit the hour. They are like ships with too much head on to come quickly about, nor will prosperity or even adversity be allowed to shake their habitual view of conduct. Whilst I was in London, M. Guizot arrived there on his escape from Paris, in February, 1848. Many private friends called on him. His name was immediately proposed as an honorary member of the Athenæum. M. Guizot was blackballed. Certainly they knew the distinction of his name. But the Englishman is not fickle. He had really made up his mind now for years as he read his newspaper, to hate and despise M. Guizot; and the altered position of the man as an illustrious exile and a guest in the country, makes no difference to him, as it would instantly to an American.

They require the same adherence, thorough conviction and reality, in public men. It is the want of character which makes the low reputa-

tion of the Irish members. "See them," they said, "one hundred and twenty-seven all voting like sheep, never proposing any thing, and all but four voting the income tax," — which was an ill-judged concession of the government, relieving Irish property from the burdens charged on English.

They have a horror of adventurers in or out of Parliament. The ruling passion of Englishmen in these days is a terror of humbug. In the same proportion they value honesty, stoutness, and adherence to your own. They like a man committed to his objects. They hate the French, as frivolous; they hate the Irish, as aimless; they hate the Germans, as professors. In February, 1848, they said, Look, the French king and his party fell for want of a shot; they had not conscience to shoot, so entirely was the pith and heart of monarchy eaten out.

They attack their own politicians every day, on the same grounds, as adventurers. They love stoutness in standing for your right, in declining money or promotion that costs any concession.[1] The barrister refuses the silk gown of Queen's Counsel, if his junior have it one day earlier. Lord Collingwood would not accept his medal for victory on 14 February, 1797, if

he did not receive one for victory on 1st June, 1794; and the long withholden medal was accorded. When Castlereagh dissuaded Lord Wellington from going to the king's levee until the unpopular Cintra business had been explained, he replied, "You furnish me a reason for going. I will go to this, or I will never go to a king's levee."[1] The radical mob at Oxford cried after the tory Lord Eldon, "There's old Eldon; cheer him; he never ratted."[2] They have given the parliamentary nickname of *Trimmers* to the timeservers, whom English character does not love.[3]

They are very liable in their politics to extraordinary delusions; thus to believe what stands recorded in the gravest books, that the movement of 10 April, 1848, was urged or assisted by foreigners: which, to be sure, is paralleled by the democratic whimsy in this country which I have noticed to be shared by men sane on other points, that the English are at the bottom of the agitation of slavery, in American politics: and then again by the French popular legends on the subject of *perfidious Albion*. But suspicion will make fools of nations as of citizens.

A slow temperament makes them less rapid and ready than other countrymen, and has given

occasion to the observation that English wit comes afterwards, — which the French denote as *esprit d'escalier*. This dulness makes their attachment to home and their adherence in all foreign countries to home habits. The Englishman who visits Mount Etna will carry his tea-kettle to the top. The old Italian author of the "Relation of England" (in 1500), says, "I have it on the best information, that, when the war is actually raging most furiously, they will seek for good eating and all their other comforts, without thinking what harm might befall them." Then their eyes seem to be set at the bottom of a tunnel, and they affirm the one small fact they know, with the best faith in the world that nothing else exists. And as their own belief in guineas is perfect, they readily, on all occasions, apply the pecuniary argument as final. Thus when the Rochester rappings[1] began to be heard of in England, a man deposited £100 in a sealed box in the Dublin Bank, and then advertised in the newspapers to all somnambulists, mesmerizers and others, that whoever could tell him the number of his note should have the money. He let it lie there six months, the newspapers now and then, at his instance, stimulating the attention of the adepts; but none could ever

tell him; and he said, "Now let me never be bothered more with this proven lie." It is told of a good Sir John that he heard a case stated by counsel, and made up his mind; then the counsel for the other side taking their turn to speak, he found himself so unsettled and perplexed that he exclaimed, "So help me God! I will never listen to evidence again." Any number of delightful examples of this English stolidity are the anecdotes of Europe. I knew a very worthy man, — a magistrate, I believe he was, in the town of Derby, — who went to the opera to see Malibran. In one scene, the heroine was to rush across a ruined bridge. Mr. B. arose and mildly yet firmly called the attention of the audience and the performers to the fact that, in his judgment, the bridge was unsafe! This English stolidity contrasts with French wit and tact. The French, it is commonly said, have greatly more influence in Europe than the English. What influence the English have is by brute force of wealth and power; that of the French by affinity and talent. The Italian is subtle, the Spaniard treacherous: tortures, it is said, could never wrest from an Egyptian the confession of a secret. None of these traits belong to the Englishman. His choler and conceit force

every thing out. Defoe, who knew his countrymen well, says of them, —

> "In close intrigue, their faculty 's but weak,
> For generally whate'er they know, they speak,
> And often their own counsels undermine
> By mere infirmity without design ;
> From whence, the learned say, it doth proceed,
> That English treasons never can succeed ;
> For they 're so open-hearted, you may know
> Their own most secret thoughts, and others' too."

CHAPTER VIII

CHARACTER

THE English race are reputed morose. I do not know that they have sadder brows than their neighbors of northern climates. They are sad by comparison with the singing and dancing nations: not sadder, but slow and staid, as finding their joys at home. They, too, believe that where there is no enjoyment of life there can be no vigor and art in speech or thought; that your merry heart goes all the way, your sad one tires in a mile. This trait of gloom has been fixed on them by French travellers, who, from Froissart, Voltaire, Le Sage, Mirabeau, down to the lively journalists of the *feuilletons*, have spent their wit on the solemnity of their neighbors. The French say, gay conversation is unknown in their island. The Englishman finds no relief from reflection, except in reflection. When he wishes for amusement, he goes to work. His hilarity is like an attack of fever. Religion, the theatre and the reading the books of his country all feed and increase his natural melancholy. The police does not interfere with public diversions. It thinks itself

bound in duty to respect the pleasures and rare gayety of this inconsolable nation; and their well-known courage is entirely attributable to their disgust of life.

I suppose their gravity of demeanor and their few words have obtained this reputation. As compared with the Americans, I think them cheerful and contented. Young people in this country are much more prone to melancholy. The English have a mild aspect and a ringing cheerful voice. They are large-natured and not so easily amused as the southerners, and are among them as grown people among children, requiring war, or trade, or engineering, or science, instead of frivolous games. They are proud and private, and even if disposed to recreation, will avoid an open garden. They sported sadly; *ils s'amusaient tristement, selon la coutume de leur pays*, said Froissart;[1] and I suppose never nation built their party-walls so thick, or their garden-fences so high. Meat and wine produce no effect on them. They are just as cold, quiet and composed, at the end, as at the beginning of dinner.

The reputation of taciturnity they have enjoyed for six or seven hundred years; and a kind of pride in bad public speaking is noted in the House of Commons, as if they were willing to

show that they did not live by their tongues, or thought they spoke well enough if they had the tone of gentlemen. In mixed company they shut their mouths. A Yorkshire mill-owner told me he had ridden more than once all the way from London to Leeds, in the first-class carriage, with the same persons, and no word exchanged. The club-houses were established to cultivate social habits, and it is rare that more than two eat together, and oftenest one eats alone. Was it then a stroke of humor in the serious Swedenborg, or was it only his pitiless logic, that made him shut up the English souls in a heaven by themselves?

They are contradictorily described as sour, splenetic and stubborn, — and as mild, sweet and sensible. The truth is they have great range and variety of character. Commerce sends abroad multitudes of different classes. The choleric Welshman, the fervid Scot, the bilious resident in the East or West Indies, are wide of the perfect behavior of the educated and dignified man of family. So is the burly farmer; so is the country squire, with his narrow and violent life. In every inn is the Commercial-Room, in which 'travellers,' or bagmen who carry patterns and solicit orders for the manufacturers, are wont to be entertained. It easily happens that this class

should characterize England to the foreigner, who meets them on the road and at every public house, whilst the gentry avoid the taverns, or seclude themselves whilst in them.

But these classes are the right English stock, and may fairly show the national qualities, before yet art and education have dealt with them. They are good lovers, good haters, slow but obstinate admirers, and in all things very much steeped in their temperament, like men hardly awaked from deep sleep, which they enjoy. Their habits and instincts cleave to nature. They are of the earth, earthy ; and of the sea, as the sea-kinds, attached to it for what it yields them, and not from any sentiment. They are full of coarse strength, rude exercise, butcher's meat and sound sleep ; and suspect any poetic insinuation or any hint for the conduct of life which reflects on this animal existence, as if somebody were fumbling at the umbilical cord and might stop their supplies. They doubt a man's sound judgment if he does not eat with appetite, and shake their heads if he is particularly chaste. Take them as they come, you shall find in the common people a surly indifference, sometimes gruffness and ill temper ; and in minds of more power, magazines of inexhaustible war, challenging

"The ruggedest hour that time and spite dare bring
To frown upon the enraged Northumberland." [1]

They are headstrong believers and defenders of their opinion, and not less resolute in maintaining their whim and perversity. Hezekiah Woodward wrote a book against the Lord's Prayer. And one can believe that Burton, the Anatomist of Melancholy, having predicted from the stars the hour of his death, slipped the knot himself round his own neck, not to falsify his horoscope.

Their looks bespeak an invincible stoutness: they have extreme difficulty to run away, and will die game. Wellington said of the young coxcombs of the Life-Guards, delicately brought up, "But the puppies fight well;" and Nelson said of his sailors, "They really mind shot no more than peas." Of absolute stoutness no nation has more or better examples. They are good at storming redoubts, at boarding frigates, at dying in the last ditch, or any desperate service which has daylight and honor in it; but not, I think, at enduring the rack, or any passive obedience, like jumping off a castle-roof at the word of a czar. Being both vascular and highly organized, so as to be very sensible of pain; and intellectual, so as to see reason and glory in a matter.

Of that constitutional force which yields the supplies of the day, they have the more than enough; the excess which creates courage on fortitude, genius in poetry, invention in mechanics, enterprise in trade, magnificence in wealth, splendor in ceremonies, petulance and projects in youth. The young men have a rude health which runs into peccant humors. They drink brandy like water, cannot expend their quantities of waste strength on riding, hunting, swimming and fencing, and run into absurd frolics with the gravity of the Eumenides. They stoutly carry into every nook and corner of the earth their turbulent sense; leaving no lie uncontradicted; no pretension unexamined. They chew hasheesh; cut themselves with poisoned creases; swing their hammock in the boughs of the Bohon Upas; taste every poison; buy every secret; at Naples they put St. Januarius's blood in an alembic; they saw a hole into the head of the "winking Virgin," to know why she winks; measure with an English footrule every cell of the Inquisition, every Turkish caaba, every Holy of holies; translate and send to Bentley the arcanum bribed and bullied away from shuddering Bramins; and measure their own strength by the terror they cause. These travellers are of every class, the

best and the worst; and it may easily happen that those of rudest behavior are taken notice of and remembered. The Saxon melancholy in the vulgar rich and poor appears as gushes of ill-humor, which every check exasperates into sarcasm and vituperation. There are multitudes of rude young English who have the self-sufficiency and bluntness of their nation, and who, with their disdain of the rest of mankind and with this indigestion and choler, have made the English traveller a proverb for uncomfortable and offensive manners. It was no bad description of the Briton generically, what was said two hundred years ago of one particular Oxford scholar: "He was a very bold man, uttered any thing that came into his mind, not only among his companions, but in public coffee-houses, and would often speak his mind of particular persons then accidentally present, without examining the company he was in; for which he was often reprimanded and several times threatened to be kicked and beaten."

The common Englishman is prone to forget a cardinal article in the bill of social rights, that every man has a right to his own ears. No man can claim to usurp more than a few cubic feet of the audibilities of a public room, or to put upon

the company with the loud statement of his crotchets or personalities.

But it is in the deep traits of race that the fortunes of nations are written, and however derived, — whether a happier tribe or mixture of tribes, the air, or what circumstance that mixed for them the golden mean of temperament, — here exists the best stock in the world, broad-fronted, broad-bottomed, best for depth, range and equability; men of aplomb and reserves, great range and many moods, strong instincts, yet apt for culture; war-class as well as clerks; earls and tradesmen; wise minority, as well as foolish majority; abysmal temperament, hiding wells of wrath, and glooms on which no sunshine settles, alternated with a common sense and humanity which hold them fast to every piece of cheerful duty; making this temperament a sea to which all storms are superficial; a race to which their fortunes flow, as if they alone had the elastic organization at once fine and robust enough for dominion; as if the burly inexpressive, now mute and contumacious, now fierce and sharp-tongued dragon, which once made the island light with his fiery breath, had bequeathed his ferocity to his conqueror. They hide virtues under vices, or the semblance of them. It is the misshapen hairy

Scandinavian troll again, who lifts the cart out of the mire, or threshes

"The corn
That ten day-laborers could not end,"[1]

but it is done in the dark and with muttered maledictions. He is a churl with a soft place in his heart, whose speech is a brash of bitter waters, but who loves to help you at a pinch. He says no, and serves you, and your thanks disgust him. Here was lately a cross-grained miser, odd and ugly, resembling in countenance the portrait of Punch with the laugh left out; rich by his own industry; sulking in a lonely house; who never gave a dinner to any man and disdained all courtesies: yet as true a worshipper of beauty in form and color as ever existed, and profusely pouring over the cold mind of his countrymen creations of grace and truth, removing the reproach of sterility from English art, catching from their savage climate every fine hint, and importing into their galleries every tint and trait of sunnier cities and skies; making an era in painting; and when he saw that the splendor of one of his pictures in the Exhibition dimmed his rival's that hung next it, secretly took a brush and blackened his own.[2]

They do not wear their heart in their sleeve for daws to peck at.[3] They have that phlegm or

staidness which it is a compliment to disturb. "Great men," said Aristotle, "are always of a nature originally melancholy." 'T is the habit of a mind which attaches to abstractions with a passion which gives vast results. They dare to displease, they do not speak to expectation. They like the sayers of No, better than the sayers of Yes. Each of them has an opinion which he feels it becomes him to express all the more that it differs from yours. They are meditating opposition. This gravity is inseparable from minds of great resources.

There is an English hero superior to the French, the German, the Italian, or the Greek. When he is brought to the strife with fate, he sacrifices a richer material possession, and on more purely metaphysical grounds. He is there with his own consent, face to face with fortune, which he defies. On deliberate choice and from grounds of character, he has elected his part to live and die for, and dies with grandeur. This race has added new elements to humanity and has a deeper root in the world.

They have great range of scale, from ferocity to exquisite refinement. With larger scale, they have great retrieving power. After running each tendency to an extreme, they try another tack

with equal heat. More intellectual than other races, when they live with other races they do not take their language, but bestow their own. They subsidize other nations, and are not subsidized. They proselyte, and are not proselyted. They assimilate other races to themselves, and are not assimilated. The English did not calculate the conquest of the Indies. It fell to their character. So they administer, in different parts of the world, the codes of every empire and race; in Canada, old French law; in the Mauritius, the Code Napoléon; in the West Indies, the edicts of the Spanish Cortes; in the East Indies, the Laws of Menu; in the Isle of Man, of the Scandinavian Thing; at the Cape of Good Hope, of the old Netherlands; and in the Ionian Islands, the Pandects of Justinian.

They are very conscious of their advantageous position in history. England is the lawgiver, the patron, the instructor, the ally. Compare the tone of the French and of the English press: the first querulous, captious, sensitive about English opinion; the English press never timorous about French opinion, but arrogant and contemptuous.

They are testy and headstrong through an excess of will and bias; churlish as men sometimes please to be who do not forget a debt, who ask

no favors and who will do what they like with their own. With education and intercourse, these asperities wear off and leave the good-will pure. If anatomy is reformed according to national tendencies, I suppose the spleen will hereafter be found in the Englishman, not found in the American, and differencing the one from the other. I anticipate another anatomical discovery, that this organ will be found to be cortical and caducous; that they are superficially morose, but at last tender-hearted, herein differing from Rome and the Latin nations. Nothing savage, nothing mean resides in the English heart. They are subject to panics of credulity and of rage, but the temper of the nation, however disturbed, settles itself soon and easily, as, in this temperate zone, the sky after whatever storms clears again, and serenity is its normal condition.

A saving stupidity masks and protects their perception, as the curtain of the eagle's eye. Our swifter Americans, when they first deal with English, pronounce them stupid; but, later, do them justice as people who wear well, or hide their strength. To understand the power of performance that is in their finest wits, in the patient Newton, or in the versatile transcendent

poets, or in the Dugdales, Gibbons, Hallams, Eldons and Peels, one should see how English day-laborers hold out. High and low, they are of an unctuous texture. There is an adipocere in their constitution, as if they had oil also for their mental wheels and could perform vast amounts of work without damaging themselves.

Even the scale of expense on which people live, and to which scholars and professional men conform, proves the tension of their muscle, when vast numbers are found who can each lift this enormous load. I might even add, their daily feasts argue a savage vigor of body.

No nation was ever so rich in able men; "Gentlemen," as Charles I. said of Strafford, "whose abilities might make a prince rather afraid than ashamed in the greatest affairs of state;" men of such temper, that, like Baron Vere, "had one seen him returning from a victory, he would by his silence have suspected that he had lost the day; and, had he beheld him in a retreat, he would have collected him a conqueror by the cheerfulness of his spirit."[1]

The following passage from the "Heimskringla" might almost stand as a portrait of the modern Englishman: — "Haldor was very stout and strong and remarkably handsome in

appearances. King Harold gave him this testimony, that he, among all his men, cared least about doubtful circumstances, whether they betokened danger or pleasure ; for whatever turned up, he was never in higher nor in lower spirits, never slept less nor more on account of them, nor ate nor drank but according to his custom. Haldor was not a man of many words, but short in conversation, told his opinion bluntly and was obstinate and hard : and this could not please the king, who had many clever people about him, zealous in his service. Haldor remained a short time with the king, and then came to Iceland, where he took up his abode in Hiardaholt and dwelt in that farm to a very advanced age." [1]

The national temper, in the civil history, is not flashy or whiffling. The slow, deep English mass smoulders with fire, which at last sets all its borders in flame. The wrath of London is not French wrath, but has a long memory, and, in its hottest heat, a register and rule.

Half their strength they put not forth. They are capable of a sublime resolution, and if hereafter the war of races, often predicted, and making itself a war of opinions also (a question of despotism and liberty coming from Eastern Europe), should menace the English civilization,

these sea-kings may take once again to their floating castles and find a new home and a second millennium of power in their colonies.

The stability of England is the security of the modern world. If the English race were as mutable as the French, what reliance? But the English stand for liberty. The conservative, money-loving, lord-loving English are yet liberty-loving; and so freedom is safe: for they have more personal force than any other people. The nation always resist the immoral action of their government. They think humanely on the affairs of France, of Turkey, of Poland, of Hungary, of Schleswig Holstein, though overborne by the statecraft of the rulers at last.

Does the early history of each tribe show the permanent bias, which, though not less potent, is masked as the tribe spreads its activity into colonies, commerce, codes, arts, letters? The early history shows it, as the musician plays the air which he proceeds to conceal in a tempest of variations. In Alfred, in the Northmen, one may read the genius of the English society, namely that private life is the place of honor. Glory, a career, and ambition, words familiar to the longitude of Paris, are seldom heard in English speech. Nelson wrote from their hearts his homely tele-

graph, " England expects every man to do his duty."

For actual service, for the dignity of a profession, or to appease diseased or inflamed talent, the army and navy may be entered (the worst boys doing well in the navy); and the civil service in departments where serious official work is done; and they hold in esteem the barrister engaged in the severer studies of the law. But the calm, sound and most British Briton shrinks from public life as charlatanism, and respects an economy founded on agriculture, coal-mines, manufactures or trade, which secures an independence through the creation of real values.

They wish neither to command nor obey, but to be kings in their own houses. They are intellectual and deeply enjoy literature; they like well to have the world served up to them in books, maps, models, and every mode of exact information, and, though not creators in art, they value its refinement. They are ready for leisure, can direct and fill their own day, nor need so much as others the constraint of a necessity. But the history of the nation discloses, at every turn, this original predilection for private independence, and however this inclination may have been disturbed by the bribes with which their

vast colonial power has warped men out of orbit, the inclination endures, and forms and reforms the laws, letters, manners and occupations. They choose that welfare which is compatible with the commonwealth, knowing that such alone is stable ; as wise merchants prefer investments in the three per cents.

CHAPTER IX

COCKAYNE

THE English are a nation of humorists. Individual right is pushed to the uttermost bound compatible with public order. Property is so perfect that it seems the craft of that race, and not to exist elsewhere. The king cannot step on an acre which the peasant refuses to sell.[2] A testator endows a dog or a rookery, and Europe cannot interfere with his absurdity. Every individual has his particular way of living, which he pushes to folly, and the decided sympathy of his compatriots is engaged to back up Mr. Crump's whim by statutes and chancellors and horse-guards. There is no freak so ridiculous but some Englishman has attempted to immortalize by money and law. British citizenship is as omnipotent as Roman was. Mr. Cockayne is very sensible of this. The pursy man means by freedom the right to do as he pleases, and does wrong in order to feel his freedom, and makes a conscience of persisting in it.

He is intensely patriotic, for his country is so small. His confidence in the power and performance of his nation makes him provokingly

incurious about other nations. He dislikes foreigners. Swedenborg, who lived much in England, notes "the similitude of minds among the English, in consequence of which they contract familiarity with friends who are of that nation, and seldom with others; and they regard foreigners as one looking through a telescope from the top of a palace regards those who dwell or wander about out of the city." A much older traveller, the Venetian who wrote the "Relation of England," in 1500, says: — "The English are great lovers of themselves and of every thing belonging to them. They think that there are no other men than themselves and no other world but England; and whenever they see a handsome foreigner, they say that he looks like an Englishman and it is a great pity he should not be an Englishman; and whenever they partake of any delicacy with a foreigner, they ask him whether such a thing is made in his country." When he adds epithets of praise, his climax is, "So English;" and when he wishes to pay you the highest compliment, he says, "I should not know you from an Englishman." France is, by its natural contrast, a kind of blackboard on which English character draws its own traits in chalk.[1] This arrogance habitually exhibits itself

in allusions to the French. I suppose that all men of English blood in America, Europe or Asia, have a secret feeling of joy that they are not French natives. Mr. Coleridge is said to have given public thanks to God, at the close of a lecture, that he had defended him from being able to utter a single sentence in the French language. I have found that Englishmen have such a good opinion of England, that the ordinary phrases in all good society, of postponing or disparaging one's own things in talking with a stranger, are seriously mistaken by them for an insuppressible homage to the merits of their nation ; and the New Yorker or Pennsylvanian who modestly laments the disadvantage of a new country, log-huts and savages, is surprised by the instant and unfeigned commiseration of the whole company, who plainly account all the world out of England a heap of rubbish.

The same insular limitation pinches his foreign politics. He sticks to his traditions and usages, and, so help him God! he will force his island by-laws down the throat of great countries, like India, China, Canada, Australia,[1] and not only so, but impose Wapping on the Congress of Vienna and trample down all nationalities with his taxed boots. Lord Chatham goes for liberty

and no taxation without representation; — for that is British law; but not a hobnail shall they dare make in America, but buy their nails in England; — for that also is British law; and the fact that British commerce was to be re-created by the independence of America, took them all by surprise.

In short, I am afraid that English nature is so rank and aggressive as to be a little incompatible with every other. The world is not wide enough for two.

But beyond this nationality, it must be admitted, the island offers a daily worship to the old Norse god Brage, celebrated among our Scandinavian forefathers for his eloquence and majestic air. The English have a steady courage that fits them for great attempts and endurance: they have also a petty courage, through which every man delights in showing himself for what he is and in doing what he can; so that in all companies, each of them has too good an opinion of himself to imitate anybody. He hides no defect of his form, features, dress, connection, or birthplace, for he thinks every circumstance belonging to him comes recommended to you. If one of them have a bald, or a red, or a green head, or bow legs, or a scar, or mark, or a

paunch, or a squeaking or a raven voice, he has persuaded himself that there is something modish and becoming in it, and that it sits well on him.

But nature makes nothing in vain, and this little superfluity of self-regard in the English brain is one of the secrets of their power and history. It sets every man on being and doing what he really is and can. It takes away a dodging, skulking, secondary air, and encourages a frank and manly bearing, so that each man makes the most of himself and loses no opportunity for want of pushing. A man's personal defects will commonly have, with the rest of the world, precisely that importance which they have to himself. If he makes light of them, so will other men. We all find in these a convenient metre of character, since a little man would be ruined by the vexation. I remember a shrewd politician, in one of our western cities, told me that "he had known several successful statesmen made by their foible." And another, an ex-governor of Illinois, said to me, "If the man knew anything, he would sit in a corner and be modest; but he is such an ignorant peacock that he goes bustling up and down and hits on extraordinary discoveries."

There is also this benefit in brag, that the speaker is unconsciously expressing his own ideal.

Humor him by all means, draw it all out and hold him to it.[1] Their culture generally enables the travelled English to avoid any ridiculous extremes of this self-pleasing, and to give it an agreeable air. Then the natural disposition is fostered by the respect which they find entertained in the world for English ability. It was said of Louis XIV., that his gait and air were becoming enough in so great a monarch, yet would have been ridiculous in another man; so the prestige of the English name warrants a certain confident bearing, which a Frenchman or Belgian could not carry. At all events, they feel themselves at liberty to assume the most extraordinary tone on the subject of English merits.

An English lady on the Rhine hearing a German speaking of her party as foreigners, exclaimed, "No, we are not foreigners; we are English; it is you that are foreigners." They tell you daily in London the story of the Frenchman and Englishman who quarrelled. Both were unwilling to fight, but their companions put them up to it; at last it was agreed that they should fight alone, in the dark, and with pistols: the candles were put out, and the Englishman, to make sure not to hit any body, fired up the chimney, — and brought down the Frenchman.

They have no curiosity about foreigners, and answer any information you may volunteer with "Oh, Oh!" until the informant makes up his mind that they shall die in their ignorance, for any help he will offer. There are really no limits to this conceit, though brighter men among them make painful efforts to be candid.

The habit of brag runs through all classes, from the "Times" newspaper through politicians and poets, through Wordsworth, Carlyle, Mill and Sydney Smith, down to the boys of Eton. In the gravest treatise on political economy, in a philosophical essay, in books of science, one is surprised by the most innocent exhibition of unflinching nationality. In a tract on Corn, a most amiable and accomplished gentleman writes thus: — "Though Britain, according to Bishop Berkeley's idea, were surrounded by a wall of brass ten thousand cubits in height, still she would as far excel the rest of the globe in riches, as she now does both in this secondary quality and in the more important ones of freedom, virtue and science." [1]

The English dislike the American structure of society, whilst yet trade, mills, public education and Chartism are doing what they can to create in England the same social condition.[2]

America is the paradise of the economists ; is the favorable exception invariably quoted to the rules of ruin ; but when he speaks directly of the Americans the islander forgets his philosophy and remembers his disparaging anecdotes.

But this childish patriotism costs something, like all narrowness. The English sway of their colonies has no root of kindness. They govern by their arts and ability ; they are more just than kind ; and whenever an abatement of their power is felt, they have not conciliated the affection on which to rely.

Coarse local distinctions, as those of nation, province or town, are useful in the absence of real ones ; but we must not insist on these accidental lines. Individual traits are always triumphing over national ones. There is no fence in metaphysics discriminating Greek, or English, or Spanish science. Æsop and Montaigne, Cervantes and Saadi are men of the world ; and to wave our own flag at the dinner table or in the University is to carry the boisterous dulness of a fire-club into a polite circle. Nature and destiny are always on the watch for our follies. Nature trips us up when we strut ; and there are curious examples in history on this very point of national pride.

George of Cappadocia, born at Epiphania in Cilicia, was a low parasite who got a lucrative contract to supply the army with bacon. A rogue and informer, he got rich and was forced to run from justice. He saved his money, embraced Arianism, collected a library, and got promoted by a faction to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. When Julian came, A. D. 361, George was dragged to prison; the prison was burst open by the mob and George was lynched, as he deserved. And this precious knave became, in good time, Saint George of England, patron of chivalry, emblem of victory and civility and the pride of the best blood of the modern world.

Strange, that the solid truth-speaking Briton should derive from an impostor. Strange, that the New World should have no better luck, — that broad America must wear the name of a thief. Amerigo Vespucci, the pickle-dealer at Seville, who went out, in 1499, a subaltern with Hojeda, and whose highest naval rank was boatswain's mate in an expedition that never sailed, managed in this lying world to supplant Columbus and baptize half the earth with his own dishonest name. Thus nobody can throw stones. We are equally badly off in our founders; and the false pickle-dealer is an offset to the false bacon-seller.[1]

CHAPTER X

WEALTH

THERE is no country in which so absolute a homage is paid to wealth. In America there is a touch of shame when a man exhibits the evidences of large property, as if after all it needed apology. But the Englishman has pure pride in his wealth, and esteems it a final certificate. A coarse logic rules throughout all English souls; — if you have merit, can you not show it by your good clothes and coach and horses? How can a man be a gentleman without a pipe of wine? Haydon says, "There is a fierce resolution to make every man live according to the means he possesses."[1] There is a mixture of religion in it. They are under the Jewish law, and read with sonorous emphasis that their days shall be long in the land, they shall have sons and daughters, flocks and herds, wine and oil. In exact proportion is the reproach of poverty. They do not wish to be represented except by opulent men. An Englishman who has lost his fortune is said to have died of a broken heart. The last term of insult is, "a beggar." Nelson said, "The want of fortune is a crime which I can never get over." Sydney

Smith said, " Poverty is infamous in England." And one of their recent writers speaks, in reference to a private and scholastic life, of " the grave moral deterioration which follows an empty exchequer." You shall find this sentiment, if not so frankly put, yet deeply implied in the novels and romances of the present century, and not only in these, but in biography and in the votes of public assemblies, in the tone of the preaching and in the table-talk.

I was lately turning over Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, and looking naturally for another standard in a chronicle of the scholars of Oxford for two hundred years. But I found the two disgraces in that, as in most English books, are, first, disloyalty to Church and State, and second, to be born poor, or to come to poverty. A natural fruit of England is the brutal political economy. Malthus finds no cover laid at Nature's table for the laborer's son. In 1809, the majority in Parliament expressed itself by the language of Mr. Fuller in the House of Commons, " If you do not like the country, damn you, you can leave it." When Sir S. Romilly proposed his bill forbidding parish officers to bind children apprentices at a greater distance than forty miles from their home, Peel opposed, and Mr. Wortley

said, " though, in the higher ranks, to cultivate family affections was a good thing, it was not so among the lower orders. Better take them away from those who might deprave them. And it was highly injurious to trade to stop binding to manufacturers, as it must raise the price of labor and of manufactured goods." [1]

The respect for truth of facts in England is equalled only by the respect for wealth. It is at once the pride of art of the Saxon, as he is a wealth-maker, and his passion for independence. The Englishman believes that every man must take care of himself, and has himself to thank if he do not mend his condition. To pay their debts is their national point of honor. From the Exchequer and the East India House to the huckster's shop, every thing prospers because it is solvent. The British armies are solvent and pay for what they take. The British empire is solvent ; for in spite of the huge national debt, the valuation mounts. During the war from 1789 to 1815, whilst they complained that they were taxed within an inch of their lives, and by dint of enormous taxes were subsidizing all the continent against France, the English were growing rich every year faster than any people ever grew before. It is their maxim that the

weight of taxes must be calculated, not by what is taken, but by what is left. Solvency is in the ideas and mechanism of an Englishman. The Crystal Palace is not considered honest until it pays; no matter how much convenience, beauty, or *éclat*, it must be self-supporting. They are contented with slower steamers, as long as they know that swifter boats lose money. They proceed logically by the double method of labor and thrift. Every household exhibits an exact economy, and nothing of that uncalculated headlong expenditure which families use in America. If they cannot pay, they do not buy; for they have no presumption of better fortunes next year, as our people have; and they say without shame, I cannot afford it. Gentlemen do not hesitate to ride in the second-class cars, or in the second cabin. An economist, or a man who can proportion his means and his ambition, or bring the year round with expenditure which expresses his character without embarrassing one day of his future, is already a master of life, and a freeman. Lord Burleigh writes to his son that "one ought never to devote more than two thirds of his income to the ordinary expenses of life, since the extraordinary will be certain to absorb the other third." [1]

The ambition to create value evokes every kind of ability; government becomes a manufacturing corporation, and every house a mill. The headlong bias to utility will let no talent lie in a napkin, — if possible will teach spiders to weave silk stockings. An Englishman, while he eats and drinks no more or not much more than another man, labors three times as many hours in the course of a year as another European; or, his life as a workman is three lives. He works fast. Everything in England is at a quick pace. They have reinforced their own productivity by the creation of that marvellous machinery which differences this age from any other age.

It is a curious chapter in modern history, the growth of the machine-shop. Six hundred years ago, Roger Bacon explained the precession of the equinoxes, the consequent necessity of the reform of the calendar; measured the length of the year; invented gunpowder; and announced (as if looking from his lofty cell, over five centuries, into ours) that "machines can be constructed to drive ships more rapidly than a whole galley of rowers could do; nor would they need anything but a pilot to steer them. Carriages also might be constructed to move with an incredible speed, without the aid of any animal

Finally, it would not be impossible to make machines which by means of a suit of wings should fly in the air in the manner of birds." But the secret slept with Bacon. The six hundred years have not yet fulfilled his words. Two centuries ago the sawing of timber was done by hand; the carriage wheels ran on wooden axles; the land was tilled by wooden ploughs. And it was to little purpose that they had pit-coal, or that looms were improved, unless Watt and Stephenson had taught them to work force-pumps and power-looms by steam. The great strides were all taken within the last hundred years. The Life of Sir Robert Peel, in his day the model Englishman, very properly has, for a frontispiece, a drawing of the spinning-jenny, which wove the web of his fortunes. Hargreaves invented the spinning-jenny, and died in a work-house. Arkwright improved the invention, and the machine dispensed with the work of ninety-nine men; that is, one spinner could do as much work as one hundred had done before. The loom was improved further. But the men would sometimes strike for wages and combine against the masters, and, about 1829–30, much fear was felt lest the trade would be drawn away by these interruptions and the emigration of the spinners

to Belgium and the United States. Iron and steel are very obedient. Whether it were not possible to make a spinner that would not rebel, nor mutter, nor scowl, nor strike for wages, nor emigrate? At the solicitation of the masters, after a mob and riot at Staley Bridge, Mr. Roberts of Manchester undertook to create this peaceful fellow, instead of the quarrelsome fellow God had made. After a few trials, he succeeded, and in 1830 procured a patent for his self-acting mule ; a creation, the delight of mill-owners, and " destined," they said, " to restore order among the industrious classes ; " a machine requiring only a child's hand to piece the broken yarns. As Arkwright had destroyed domestic spinning, so Roberts destroyed the factory spinner. The power of machinery in Great Britain, in mills, has been computed to be equal to 600,000,000 men, one man being able by the aid of steam to do the work which required two hundred and fifty men to accomplish fifty years ago. The production has been commensurate. England already had this laborious race, rich soil, water, wood, coal, iron and favorable climate. Eight hundred years ago commerce had made it rich, and it was recorded, " England is the richest of all the northern nations." The

Norman historians recite that "in 1067, William carried with him into Normandy, from England, more gold and silver than had ever before been seen in Gaul." But when, to this labor and trade and these native resources was added this goblin of steam, with his myriad arms, never tired, working night and day everlastingly, the amassing of property has run out of all figures. It makes the motor of the last ninety years. The steam-pipe has added to her population and wealth the equivalent of four or five Englands. Forty thousand ships are entered in Lloyd's lists. The yield of wheat has gone on from 2,000,000 quarters in the time of the Stuarts, to 13,000,000 in 1854. A thousand million of pounds sterling are said to compose the floating money of commerce. In 1848, Lord John Russell stated that the people of this country had laid out £300,000,000 of capital in railways, in the last four years. But a better measure than these sounding figures is the estimate that there is wealth enough in England to support the entire population in idleness for one year.

The wise, versatile, all-giving machinery makes chisels, roads, locomotives, telegraphs. Whitworth divides a bar to a millionth of an

inch. Steam twines huge cannon into wreaths, as easily as it braids straw, and vies with the volcanic forces which twisted the strata. It can clothe shingle mountains with ship-oaks, make sword-blades that will cut gun-barrels in two. In Egypt, it can plant forests, and bring rain after three thousand years. Already it is rudder-ing the balloon, and the next war will be fought in the air. But another machine more potent in England than steam is the Bank. It votes an issue of bills, population is stimulated and cities rise; it refuses loans, and emigration empties the country; trade sinks; revolutions break out; kings are dethroned. By these new agents our social system is moulded. By dint of steam and of money, war and commerce are changed. Nations have lost their old omnipotence; the patriotic tie does not hold. Nations are getting obsolete, we go and live where we will. Steam has enabled men to choose what law they will live under. Money makes place for them. The telegraph is a limp band that will hold the Fenris-wolf of war.[1] For now that a telegraph line runs through France and Europe from London, every message it transmits makes stronger by one thread the band which war will have to cut.

The introduction of these elements gives new resources to existing proprietors. A sporting duke may fancy that the state depends on the House of Lords, but the engineer sees that every stroke of the steam-piston gives value to the duke's land, fills it with tenants; doubles, quadruples, centuples the duke's capital, and creates new measures and new necessities for the culture of his children. Of course it draws the nobility into the competition, as stockholders in the mine, the canal, the railway, in the application of steam to agriculture, and sometimes into trade. But it also introduces large classes into the same competition; the old energy of the Norse race arms itself with these magnificent powers; new men prove an overmatch for the land-owner, and the mill buys out the castle. Scandinavian Thor, who once forged his bolts in icy Hecla and built galleys by lonely fiords, in England has advanced with the times, has shorn his beard, enters Parliament, sits down at a desk in the India House and lends Miöllnir to Birmingham for a steam-hammer.[1]

The creation of wealth in England in the last ninety years is a main fact in modern history. The wealth of London determines prices all over the globe. All things precious, or useful,

or amusing, or intoxicating, are sucked into this commerce and floated to London. Some English private fortunes reach, and some exceed a million of dollars a year. A hundred thousand palaces adorn the island. All that can feed the senses and passions, all that can succor the talent or arm the hands of the intelligent middle class, who never spare in what they buy for their own consumption; all that can aid science, gratify taste, or soothe comfort, is in open market. Whatever is excellent and beautiful in civil, rural, or ecclesiastic architecture, in fountain, garden, or grounds, — the English noble crosses sea and land to see and to copy at home. The taste and science of thirty peaceful generations; the gardens which Evelyn planted; the temples and pleasure-houses which Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren built; the wood that Gibbons carved; the taste of foreign and domestic artists, Shenstone, Pope, Brown, Loudon, Paxton,[1] — are in the vast auction, and the hereditary principle heaps on the owner of to-day the benefit of ages of owners. The present possessors are to the full as absolute as any of their fathers in choosing and procuring what they like. This comfort and splendor, the breadth of lake and mountain, tillage, pasture and park, sumptuous castle and

modern villa, — all consist with perfect order. They have no revolutions ; no horse-guards dictating to the crown ; no Parisian *poissardes* and barricades ; no mob : but drowsy habitude, daily dress-dinners, wine and ale and beer and gin and sleep.

With this power of creation and this passion for independence, property has reached an ideal perfection. It is felt and treated as the national life-blood. The laws are framed to give property the securest possible basis, and the provisions to lock and transmit it have exercised the cunningest heads in a profession which never admits a fool. The rights of property nothing but felony and treason can override. The house is a castle which the king cannot enter. The Bank is a strong box to which the king has no key. Whatever surly sweetness possession can give, is tasted in England to the dregs. Vested rights are awful things, and absolute possession gives the smallest freeholder identity of interest with the duke. High stone fences and padlocked garden-gates announce the absolute will of the owner to be alone. Every whim of exaggerated egotism is put into stone and iron, into silver and gold, with costly deliberation and detail.

An Englishman hears that the Queen Dowager wishes to establish some claim to put her park paling a rod forward into his grounds, so as to get a coachway and save her a mile to the avenue. Instantly he transforms his paling into stone-masonry, solid as the walls of Cuma, and all Europe cannot prevail on him to sell or compound for an inch of the land. They delight in a freak as the proof of their sovereign freedom. Sir Edward Boynton, at Spic Park at Cadenham, on a precipice of incomparable prospect, built a house like a long barn, which had not a window on the prospect side. Strawberry Hill of Horace Walpole, Fonthill Abbey of Mr. Beckford, were freaks; and Newstead Abbey became one in the hands of Lord Byron.

But the proudest result of this creation has been the great and refined forces it has put at the disposal of the private citizen. In the social world an Englishman to-day has the best lot. He is a king in a plain coat. He goes with the most powerful protection, keeps the best company, is armed by the best education, is seconded by wealth; and his English name and accidents are like a flourish of trumpets announcing him. This, with his quiet style of manners, gives him the power of a sovereign with-

out the inconveniences which belong to that rank. I much prefer the condition of an English gentleman of the better class to that of any potentate in Europe, — whether for travel, or for opportunity of society, or for access to means of science or study, or for mere comfort and easy healthy relation to people at home.

Such as we have seen is the wealth of England; a mighty mass, and made good in whatever details we care to explore. The cause and spring of it is the wealth of temperament in the people. The wonder of Britain is this plenteous nature. Her worthies are ever surrounded by as good men as themselves; [1] each is a captain a hundred strong, and that wealth of men is represented again in the faculty of each individual, — that he has waste strength, power to spare. The English are so rich and seem to have established a tap-root in the bowels of the planet, because they are constitutionally fertile and creative.

But a man must keep an eye on his servants, if he would not have them rule him. Man is a shrewd inventor and is ever taking the hint of a new machine from his own structure, adapting some secret of his own anatomy in iron, wood and leather to some required function in the work of the world. But it is found that the

machine unmans the user. What he gains in making cloth, he loses in general power. There should be temperance in making cloth, as well as in eating. A man should not be a silk-worm, nor a nation a tent of caterpillars.[1] The robust rural Saxon degenerates in the mills to the Leicester stockinger, to the imbecile Manchester spinner, — far on the way to be spiders and needles. The incessant repetition of the same hand-work dwarfs the man, robs him of his strength, wit and versatility, to make a pin-polisher, a buckle-maker, or any other specialty ; and presently, in a change of industry, whole towns are sacrificed like ant-hills, when the fashion of shoe-strings supersedes buckles, when cotton takes the place of linen, or railways of turnpikes, or when commons are enclosed by landlords. Then society is admonished of the mischief of the division of labor, and that the best political economy is care and culture of men ; for in these crises all are ruined except such as are proper individuals, capable of thought and of new choice and the application of their talent to new labor. Then again come in new calamities. England is aghast at the disclosure of her fraud in the adulteration of food, of drugs and of almost every fabric in her mills and shops; finding that milk will not

nourish, nor sugar sweeten, nor bread satisfy, nor pepper bite the tongue, nor glue stick. In true England all is false and forged. This too is the reaction of machinery, but of the larger machinery of commerce. 'T is not, I suppose, want of probity, so much as the tyranny of trade, which necessitates a perpetual competition of underselling, and that again a perpetual deterioration of the fabric.

The machinery has proved, like the balloon, unmanageable, and flies away with the aeronaut. Steam from the first hissed and screamed to warn him; it was dreadful with its explosion, and crushed the engineer. The machinist has wrought and watched, engineers and firemen without number have been sacrificed in learning to tame and guide the monster. But harder still it has proved to resist and rule the dragon Money, with his paper wings. Chancellors and Boards of Trade, Pitt, Peel and Robinson and their Parliaments and their whole generation adopted false principles, and went to their graves in the belief that they were enriching the country which they were impoverishing. They congratulated each other on ruinous expedients. It is rare to find a merchant who knows why a crisis occurs in trade, why prices rise or fall, or who knows the mischief of

paper-money. In the culmination of national prosperity, in the annexation of countries; building of ships, depots, towns; in the influx of tons of gold and silver; amid the chuckle of chancellors and financiers, it was found that bread rose to famine prices, that the yeoman was forced to sell his cow and pig, his tools and his acre of land; and the dreadful barometer of the poor-rates was touching the point of ruin. The poor-rate was sucking in the solvent classes and forcing an exodus of farmers and mechanics. What befalls from the violence of financial crises, befalls daily in the violence of artificial legislation.[1]

Such a wealth has England earned, ever new, bounteous and augmenting. But the question recurs, does she take the step beyond, namely to the wise use, in view of the supreme wealth of nations? We estimate the wisdom of nations by seeing what they did with their surplus capital. And, in view of these injuries, some compensation has been attempted in England. A part of the money earned returns to the brain to buy schools, libraries, bishops, astronomers, chemists and artists with; and a part to repair the wrongs of this intemperate weaving, by hospitals,

savings-banks, Mechanics' Institutes, public grounds and other charities and amenities. But the antidotes are frightfully inadequate, and the evil requires a deeper cure, which time and a simpler social organization must supply.[1] At present she does not rule her wealth. She is simply a good England, but no divinity, or wise and instructed soul. She too is in the stream of fate, one victim more in a common catastrophe.

But being in the fault, she has the misfortune of greatness to be held as the chief offender. England must be held responsible for the despotism of expense. Her prosperity, the splendor which so much manhood and talent and perseverance has thrown upon vulgar aims, is the very argument of materialism. Her success strengthens the hands of base wealth. Who can propose to youth poverty and wisdom, when mean gain has arrived at the conquest of letters and arts; when English success has grown out of the very renunciation of principles, and the dedication to outsides? A civility of trifles, of money and expense, an erudition of sensation takes place, and the putting as many impediments as we can between the man and his objects. Hardly the bravest among them have the man-

liness to resist it successfully. Hence it has come that not the aims of a manly life, but the means of meeting a certain ponderous expense, is that which is to be considered by a youth in England emerging from his minority. A large family is reckoned a misfortune. And it is a consolation in the death of the young, that a source of expense is closed.

CHAPTER XI

ARISTOCRACY

THE feudal character of the English state, now that it is getting obsolete, glares a little, in contrast with the democratic tendencies. The inequality of power and property shocks republican nerves. Palaces, halls, villas, walled parks, all over England, rival the splendor of royal seats. Many of the halls, like Haddon or Kedleston, are beautiful desolations. The proprietor never saw them, or never lived in them. Primogeniture built these sumptuous piles, and I suppose it is the sentiment of every traveller, as it was mine, It was well to come ere these were gone. Primogeniture is a cardinal rule of English property and institutions. Laws, customs, manners, the very persons and faces, affirm it.

The frame of society is aristocratic, the taste of the people is loyal. The estates, names and manners of the nobles flatter the fancy of the people and conciliate the necessary support. In spite of broken faith, stolen charters and the devastation of society by the profligacy of the court, we take sides as we read for the loyal

England and King Charles's "return to his right" with his Cavaliers, — knowing what a heartless trifler he is, and what a crew of God-forsaken robbers they are. The people of England knew as much. But the fair idea of a settled government connecting itself with heraldic names, with the written and oral history of Europe, and, at last, with the Hebrew religion and the oldest traditions of the world, was too pleasing a vision to be shattered by a few offensive realities and the politics of shoe-makers and costermongers.[1] The hopes of the commoners take the same direction with the interest of the patricians. Every man who becomes rich buys land and does what he can to fortify the nobility, into which he hopes to rise. The Anglican clergy are identified with the aristocracy. Time and law have made the joining and moulding perfect in every part. The Cathedrals, the Universities, the national music, the popular romances, conspire to uphold the heraldry which the current politics of the day are sapping.[2] The taste of the people is conservative. They are proud of the castles, and of the language and symbol of chivalry. Even the word *lord* is the luckiest style that is used in any language to designate a patrician. The superior education

and manners of the nobles recommend them to the country.

The Norwegian pirate got what he could and held it for his eldest son. The Norman noble, who was the Norwegian pirate baptized, did likewise. There was this advantage of Western over Oriental nobility, that this was recruited from below. English history is aristocracy with the doors open. Who has courage and faculty, let him come in. Of course the terms of admission to this club are hard and high. The selfishness of the nobles comes in aid of the interest of the nation to require signal merit. Piracy and war gave place to trade, politics and letters; the war-lord to the law-lord; the law-lord to the merchant and the mill-owner; but the privilege was kept, whilst the means of obtaining it were changed.

The foundations of these families lie deep in Norwegian exploits by sea and Saxon sturdiness on land. All nobility in its beginnings was somebody's natural superiority. The things these English have done were not done without peril of life, nor without wisdom and conduct; and the first hands, it may be presumed, were often challenged to show their right to their honors, or yield them to better men. "He that

will be a head, let him be a bridge," said the Welsh chief Benegridran, when he carried all his men over the river on his back. "He shall have the book," said the mother of Alfred, "who can read it;" and Alfred won it by that title: and I make no doubt that feudal tenure was no sinecure, but baron, knight and tenant often had their memories refreshed, in regard to the service by which they held their lands. The De Veres, Bohuns, Mowbrays and Plantagenets were not addicted to contemplation. The Middle Age adorned itself with proofs of manhood and devotion. Of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, the Emperor told Henry V. that no Christian king had such another knight for wisdom, nurture and manhood, and caused him to be named, "Father of curtesie." "Our success in France," says the historian, "lived and died with him."[1]

The war-lord earned his honors, and no donation of land was large, as long as it brought the duty of protecting it, hour by hour, against a terrible enemy. In France and in England the nobles were, down to a late day, born and bred to war: and the duel, which in peace still held them to the risks of war, diminished the envy that in trading and studious nations would

else have pried into their title. They were looked on as men who played high for a great stake.

Great estates are not sinecures, if they are to be kept great. A creative economy is the fuel of magnificence. In the same line of Warwick, the successor next but one to Beauchamp was the stout earl of Henry VI. and Edward IV. Few esteemed themselves in the mode, whose heads were not adorned with the black ragged staff, his badge.[1] At his house in London, six oxen were daily eaten at a breakfast, and every tavern was full of his meat, and who had any acquaintance in his family should have as much boiled and roast as he could carry on a long dagger.

The new age brings new qualities into request; the virtues of pirates gave way to those of planters, merchants, senators and scholars. Comity, social talent and fine manners, no doubt, have had their part also. I have met somewhere with a historiette, which, whether more or less true in its particulars, carries a general truth. "How came the Duke of Bedford by his great landed estates? His ancestor having travelled on the continent, a lively, pleasant man, became the companion of a foreign prince

wrecked on the Dorsetshire coast, where Mr. Russell lived. The prince recommended him to Henry VIII., who, liking his company, gave him a large share of the plundered church lands."

The pretence is that the noble is of unbroken descent from the Norman, and has never worked for eight hundred years. But the fact is otherwise. Where is Bohun? where is De Vere? The lawyer, the farmer, the silk-mercer lies *perdu* under the coronet, and winks to the antiquary to say nothing; especially skilful lawyers, nobody's sons, who did some piece of work at a nice moment for government and were rewarded with ermine.

The national tastes of the English do not lead them to the life of the courtier, but to secure the comfort and independence of their homes. The aristocracy are marked by their predilection for country-life. They are called the county-families. They have often no residence in London and only go thither a short time, during the season, to see the opera; but they concentrate the love and labor of many generations on the building, planting and decoration of their homesteads. Some of them are too old and too proud to wear titles, or, as

Sheridan said of Coke, "disdain to hide their head in a coronet;" and some curious examples are cited to show the stability of English families. Their proverb is, that fifty miles from London, a family will last a hundred years; at a hundred miles, two hundred years; and so on; but I doubt that steam, the enemy of time as well as of space, will disturb these ancient rules. Sir Henry Wotton says of the first Duke of Buckingham, "He was born at Brookeby in Leicestershire, where his ancestors had chiefly continued about the space of four hundred years, rather without obscurity, than with any great lustre."[1] Wraxall says that in 1781, Lord Surrey, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, told him that when the year 1783 should arrive, he meant to give a grand festival to all the descendants of the body of Jockey of Norfolk,[2] to mark the day when the dukedom should have remained three hundred years in their house, since its creation by Richard III. Pepys tells us, in writing of an Earl Oxford, in 1666, that the honor had now remained in that name and blood six hundred years.

This long descent of families and this cleaving through ages to the same spot of ground, captivates the imagination.[3] It has too a con-

nection with the names of the towns and districts of the country.

The names are excellent, — an atmosphere of legendary melody spread over the land. Older than all epics and histories which clothe a nation, this undershirt sits close to the body. What history too, and what stores of primitive and savage observation it infolds! Cambridge is the bridge of the Cam; Sheffield the field of the river Sheaf; Leicester the *castra*, or camp, of the Lear, or Leir (now Soar); Rochdale, of the Roch; Exeter or Excester, the *castra* of the Ex; Exmouth, Dartmouth, Sidmouth, Teignmouth, the mouths of the Ex, Dart, Sid and Teign rivers. Waltham is strong town; Radcliffe is red cliff; and so on: — a sincerity and use in naming very striking to an American, whose country is whitewashed all over by unmeaning names, the cast-off clothes of the country from which its emigrants came; or named at a pinch from a psalm-tune. But the English are those "barbarians" of Jamblichus,[1] who "are stable in their manners, and firmly continue to employ the same words, which also are dear to the gods."

'T is an old sneer that the Irish peerage drew their names from playbooks. The English lords

do not call their lands after their own names, but call themselves after their lands, as if the man represented the country that bred him; and they rightly wear the token of the glebe that gave them birth, suggesting that the tie is not cut, but that there in London, — the crags of Argyle, the kail of Cornwall, the downs of Devon, the iron of Wales, the clays of Stafford are neither forgetting nor forgotten, but know the man who was born by them and who, like the long line of his fathers, has carried that crag, that shore, dale, fen, or woodland, in his blood and manners. It has, too, the advantage of suggesting responsibleness. A susceptible man could not wear a name which represented in a strict sense a city or a county of England, without hearing in it a challenge to duty and honor.

The predilection of the patricians for residence in the country, combined with the degree of liberty possessed by the peasant, makes the safety of the English hall. Mirabeau wrote prophetically from England, in 1784, "If revolution break out in France, I tremble for the aristocracy: their châteaux will be reduced to ashes and their blood be spilt in torrents. The English tenant would defend his lord to the last extremity."[1] The English go to their estates

for grandeur. The French live at court, and exile themselves to their estates for economy. As they do not mean to live with their tenants, they do not conciliate them, but wring from them the last *sous*. Evelyn writes from Blois, in 1644: "The wolves are here in such numbers, that they often come and take children out of the streets; yet will not the Duke, who is sovereign here, permit them to be destroyed."

In evidence of the wealth amassed by ancient families, the traveller is shown the palaces in Piccadilly, Burlington House, Devonshire House, Lansdowne House in Berkshire Square, and lower down in the city, a few noble houses which still withstand in all their amplitude the encroachment of streets. The Duke of Bedford includes or included a mile square in the heart of London, where the British Museum, once Montague House, now stands, and the land occupied by Woburn Square, Bedford Square, Russell Square. The Marquis of Westminster built within a few years the series of squares called Belgravia. Stafford House[1] is the noblest palace in London. Northumberland House holds its place by Charing Cross.[2] Chesterfield House remains in Audley Street. Sion House and Holland House are in the suburbs. But

most of the historical houses are masked or lost in the modern uses to which trade or charity has converted them. A multitude of town palaces contain inestimable galleries of art.

In the country, the size of private estates is more impressive. From Barnard Castle I rode on the highway twenty-three miles from High Force, a fall of the Tees, towards Darlington, past Raby Castle, through the estate of the Duke of Cleveland. The Marquis of Breadalbane rides out of his house a hundred miles in a straight line to the sea, on his own property. The Duke of Sutherland owns the County of Sutherland, stretching across Scotland from sea to sea. The Duke of Devonshire, besides his other estates, owns 96,000 acres in the County of Derby. The Duke of Richmond has 40,000 acres at Goodwood and 300,000 at Gordon Castle. The Duke of Norfolk's park in Sussex is fifteen miles in circuit. An agriculturist bought lately the island of Lewes, in Hebrides, containing 500,000 acres. The possessions of the Earl of Lonsdale gave him eight seats in Parliament. This is the Heptarchy again; and before the Reform of 1832, one hundred and fifty-four persons sent three hundred and seven members to Parliament. The borough-mongers governed England.

These large domains are growing larger. The great estates are absorbing the small freeholds. In 1786 the soil of England was owned by 250,000 corporations and proprietors; and in 1822, by 32,000. These broad estates find room in this narrow island. All over England, scattered at short intervals among ship-yards, mills, mines and forges, are the paradises of the nobles, where the livelong repose and refinement are heightened by the contrast with the roar of industry and necessity, out of which you have stepped aside.

I was surprised to observe the very small attendance usually in the House of Lords. Out of five hundred and seventy-three peers, on ordinary days only twenty or thirty. Where are they? I asked. "At home on their estates, devoured by *ennui*, or in the Alps, or up the Rhine, in the Harz Mountains, or in Egypt, or in India, on the Ghauts." But, with such interests at stake, how can these men afford to neglect them? "O," replied my friend, "why should they work for themselves, when every man in England works for them and will suffer before they come to harm?" The hardest radical instantly uncovers and changes his tone to a

lord. It was remarked, on the 10th April, 1848 (the day of the Chartist demonstration), that the upper classes were for the first time actively interesting themselves in their own defence, and men of rank were sworn special constables with the rest. "Besides, why need they sit out the debate? Has not the Duke of Wellington, at this moment, their proxies — the proxies of fifty peers — in his pocket, to vote for them if there be an emergency?" [1]

It is however true that the existence of the House of Peers as a branch of the government entitles them to fill half the Cabinet; and their weight of property and station gives them a virtual nomination of the other half; whilst they have their share in the subordinate offices, as a school of training. This monopoly of political power has given them their intellectual and social eminence in Europe.[2] A few law lords and a few political lords take the brunt of public business. In the army, the nobility fill a large part of the high commissions, and give to these a tone of expense and splendor and also of exclusiveness.[3] They have borne their full share of duty and danger in this service, and there are few noble families which have not paid, in some of their members, the debt of life or limb in the

sacrifices of the Russian war. For the rest, the nobility have the lead in matters of state and of expense; in questions of taste, in social usages, in convivial and domestic hospitalities. In general, all that is required of them is to sit securely, to preside at public meetings, to countenance charities and to give the example of that decorum so dear to the British heart.

If one asks, in the critical spirit of the day, what service this class have rendered? — uses appear, or they would have perished long ago. Some of these are easily enumerated, others more subtle make a part of unconscious history.[1] Their institution is one step in the progress of society. For a race yields a nobility in some form, however we name the lords, as surely as it yields women.

The English nobles are high-spirited, active, educated men, born to wealth and power, who have run through every country and kept in every country the best company, have seen every secret of art and nature, and, when men of any ability or ambition, have been consulted in the conduct of every important action. You cannot wield great agencies without lending yourself to them, and when it happens that the spirit of the earl meets his rank and duties, we have the best

examples of behavior. Power of any kind readily appears in the manners; and beneficent power *le talent de bien faire*, gives a majesty which can not be concealed or resisted.

These people seem to gain as much as they lose by their position. They survey society as from the top of St. Paul's, and if they never hear plain truth from men, they see the best of everything, in every kind, and they see things so grouped and amassed as to infer easily the sum and genius, instead of tedious particularities. Their good behavior deserves all its fame, and they have that simplicity and that air of repose which are the finest ornament of greatness.[1]

The upper classes have only birth, say the people here, and not thoughts. Yes, but they have manners, and it is wonderful how much talent runs into manners: — nowhere and never so much as in England. They have the sense of superiority, the absence of all the ambitious effort which disgusts in the aspiring classes, a pure tone of thought and feeling, and the power to command, among their other luxuries, the presence of the most accomplished men in their festive meetings.

Loyalty is in the English a sub-religion. They wear the laws as ornaments, and walk by their

faith in their painted May-Fair as if among the forms of gods. The economist of 1855 who asks, Of what use are the lords? may learn of Franklin to ask, Of what use is a baby? They have been a social church proper to inspire sentiments mutually honoring the lover and the loved. Politeness is the ritual of society, as prayers are of the church, a school of manners, and a gentle blessing to the age in which it grew. 'T is a romance adorning English life with a larger horizon; a midway heaven, fulfilling to their sense their fairy tales and poetry. This, just as far as the breeding of the nobleman really made him brave, handsome, accomplished and great-hearted.

On general grounds, whatever tends to form manners or to finish men, has a great value. Every one who has tasted the delight of friendship will respect every social guard which our manners can establish, tending to secure from the intrusion of frivolous and distasteful people. The jealousy of every class to guard itself is a testimony to the reality they have found in life. When a man once knows that he has done justice to himself, let him dismiss all terrors of aristocracy as superstitions, so far as he is concerned. He who keeps the door of a mine, whether of cobalt, or mercury, or nickel, or plumbago, se-

curely knows that the world cannot do without him. Everybody who is real is open and ready for that which is also real.

Besides, these are they who make England that strongbox and museum it is; who gather and protect works of art, dragged from amidst burning cities and revolutionary countries, and brought hither out of all the world. I look with respect at houses six, seven, eight hundred, or, like Warwick Castle, nine hundred years old. I pardoned high park-fences, when I saw that besides does and pheasants, these have preserved Arundel marbles, Townley galleries, Howard and Spenserian libraries, Warwick and Portland vases, Saxon manuscripts, monastic architectures, millennial trees, and breeds of cattle elsewhere extinct. In these manors, after the frenzy of war and destruction subsides a little, the antiquary finds the frailest Roman jar or crumbling Egyptian mummy-case, without so much as a new layer of dust, keeping the series of history unbroken and waiting for its interpreter, who is sure to arrive. These lords are the treasurers and librarians of mankind, engaged by their pride and wealth to this function.

Yet there were other works for British dukes to do. George Loudon, Quintinye, Evelyn,

had taught them to make gardens. Arthur Young, Bakewell and Mechi have made them agricultural.[1] Scotland was a camp until the day of Culloden. The Dukes of Athol, Sutherland, Buccleugh and the Marquis of Breadalbane have introduced the rape-culture, the sheep-farm, wheat, drainage, the plantation of forests, the artificial replenishment of lakes and ponds with fish, the renting of game-preserves. Against the cry of the old tenantry and the sympathetic cry of the English press, they have rooted out and planted anew, and now six millions of people live, and live better, on the same land that fed three millions.

The English barons, in every period, have been brave and great, after the estimate and opinion of their times. The grand old halls scattered up and down in England, are dumb vouchers to the state and broad hospitality of their ancient lords. Shakspeare's portraits of good Duke Humphrey, of Warwick, of Northumberland, of Talbot, were drawn in strict consonance with the traditions. A sketch of the Earl of Shrewsbury, from the pen of Queen Elizabeth's archbishop Parker;[2] Lord Herbert of Cherbury's autobiography;[3] the letters and essays of Sir Philip Sidney; the anecdotes pre-

served by the antiquaries Fuller and Collins; some glimpses at the interiors of noble houses, which we owe to Pepys and Evelyn; the details which Ben Jonson's masques (performed at Kenilworth, Althorpe, Belvoir and other noble houses), record or suggest; down to Aubrey's passages of the life of Hobbes in the house of the Earl of Devon, are favorable pictures of a romantic style of manners. Penshurst still shines for us, and its Christmas revels, "where logs not burn, but men." At Wilton House the "Arcadia" was written, amidst conversations with Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, a man of no vulgar mind, as his own poems declare him.[1] I must hold Ludlow Castle an honest house, for which Milton's "Comus" was written, and the company nobly bred which performed it with knowledge and sympathy. In the roll of nobles are found poets, philosophers, chemists, astronomers, also men of solid virtues and of lofty sentiments; often they have been the friends and patrons of genius and learning, and especially of the fine arts; and at this moment, almost every great house has its sumptuous picture-gallery.

Of course there is another side to this gorgeous show. Every victory was the defeat of

a party only less worthy. Castles are proud things, but 't is safest to be outside of them. War is a foul game, and yet war is not the worst part of aristocratic history. In later times, when the baron, educated only for war, with his brains paralyzed by his stomach, found himself idle at home, he grew fat and wanton and a sorry brute.[1] Grammont, Pepys and Evelyn show the kennels to which the king and court went in quest of pleasure. Prostitutes taken from the theatres were made duchesses, their bastards dukes and earls. "The young men sat uppermost, the old serious lords were out of favor." The discourse that the king's companions had with him was "poor and frothy." No man who valued his head might do what these pot-companions familiarly did with the king. In logical sequence of these dignified revels, Pepys can tell the beggarly shifts to which the king was reduced, who could not find paper at his council table, and "no handkerchers" in his wardrobe, "and but three bands to his neck," and the linen-draper and the stationer were out of pocket and refusing to trust him, and the baker will not bring bread any longer. Meantime the English Channel was swept and London threatened by the Dutch fleet, manned too by Eng-

ish sailors, who, having been cheated of their pay for years by the king, enlisted with the enemy.

The Selwyn[1] correspondence, in the reign of George III., discloses a rottenness in the aristocracy which threatened to decompose the state. The sycophancy and sale of votes and honor, for place and title; lewdness, gaming, smuggling, bribery and cheating; the sneer at the childish indiscretion of quarrelling with ten thousand a year; the want of ideas; the splendor of the titles, and the apathy of the nation, are instructive, and make the reader pause and explore the firm bounds which confined these vices to a handful of rich men. In the reign of the Fourth George, things do not seem to have mended, and the rotten debauchee let down from a window by an inclined plane into his coach to take the air, was a scandal to Europe which the ill fame of his queen and of his family did nothing to retrieve.

Under the present reign the perfect decorum of the Court is thought to have put a check on the gross vices of the aristocracy; yet gaming, racing, drinking and mistresses bring them down, and the democrat can still gather scandals, if he will. Dismal anecdotes abound, verifying the

gossip of the last generation, of dukes served by bailiffs, with all their plate in pawn ; of great lords living by the showing of their houses, and of an old man wheeled in his chair from room to room, whilst his chambers are exhibited to the visitor for money ; of ruined dukes and earls living in exile for debt. The historic names of the Buckinghams, Beauforts, Marlboroughs and Hertfords have gained no new lustre, and now and then darker scandals break out, ominous as the new chapters added under the Orleans dynasty to the "Causes Célèbres"[1] in France. Even peers who are men of worth and public spirit are overtaken and embarrassed by their vast expense. The respectable Duke of Devonshire, willing to be the Mæcenas and Lucullus of his island, is reported to have said that he cannot live at Chatsworth but one month in the year. Their many houses eat them up. They cannot sell them, because they are entailed. They will not let them, for pride's sake, but keep them empty, aired, and the grounds mown and dressed, at a cost of four or five thousand pounds a year. The spending is for a great part in servants, in many houses exceeding a hundred.

Most of them are only chargeable with idleness, which, because it squanders such vast

power of benefit, has the mischief of crime. "They might be little Providences on earth," said my friend, "and they are, for the most part, jockeys and fops." Campbell says, "Acquaintance with the nobility, I could never keep up. It requires a life of idleness, dressing and attendance on their parties." I suppose too that a feeling of self-respect is driving cultivated men out of this society, as if the noble were slow to receive the lessons of the times and had not learned to disguise his pride of place. A man of wit, who is also one of the celebrities of wealth and fashion, confessed to his friend that he could not enter their houses without being made to feel that they were great lords, and he a low plebeian. With the tribe of *artistes*, including the musical tribe, the patrician morgue keeps no terms, but excludes them. When Julia Grisi and Mario sang at the houses of the Duke of Wellington and other grandees, a cord was stretched between the singer and the company.

When every noble was a soldier, they were carefully bred to great personal prowess. The education of a soldier is a simpler affair than that of an earl in the nineteenth century. And this was very seriously pursued; they were ex-

pert in every species of equitation, to the most dangerous practices, and this down to the accession of William of Orange. But graver men appear to have trained their sons for civil affairs. Elizabeth extended her thought to the future; and Sir Philip Sidney in his letter to his brother, and Milton and Evelyn, gave plain and hearty counsel. Already too the English noble and squire were preparing for the career of the country-gentleman and his peaceable expense. They went from city to city, learning receipts to make perfumes, sweet powders, pomanders, antidotes, gathering seeds, gems, coins and divers curiosities, preparing for a private life thereafter, in which they should take pleasure in these recreations.

All advantages given to absolve the young patrician from intellectual labor are of course mistaken. "In the university, noblemen are exempted from the public exercises for the degree, etc., by which they attain a degree called *honorary*.[1] At the same time, the fees they have to pay for matriculation, and on all other occasions, are much higher."[2] Fuller records "the observation of foreigners, that Englishmen, by making their children gentlemen before they are men, cause they are so seldom wise men."[3]

This cockering justifies Dr. Johnson's bitter apology for primogeniture, that "it makes but one fool in a family."

The revolution in society has reached this class. The great powers of industrial art have no exclusion of name or blood. The tools of our time, namely steam, ships, printing, money and popular education, belong to those who can handle them; and their effect has been that advantages once confined to men of family are now open to the whole middle class. The road that grandeur levels for his coach, toil can travel in his cart.

This is more manifest every day, but I think it is true throughout English history. English history, wisely read, is the vindication of the brain of that people. Here at last were climate and condition friendly to the working faculty. Who now will work and dare, shall rule. This is the charter, or the chartism, which fogs and seas and rains proclaimed, — that intellect and personal force should make the law; that industry and administrative talent should administer; that work should wear the crown. I know that not this, but something else is pretended. The fiction with which the noble and the bystander equally please themselves is that the former is

of unbroken descent from the Norman, and so has never worked for eight hundred years. All the families are new, but the name is old, and they have made a covenant with their memories not to disturb it. But the analysis of the peerage and gentry shows the rapid decay and extinction of old families, the continual recruiting of these from new blood.[1] The doors, though ostentatiously guarded, are really open, and hence the power of the bribe. All the barriers to rank only whet the thirst and enhance the prize. "Now," said Nelson, when clearing for battle, "a peerage, or Westminster Abbey!" "I have no illusion left," said Sidney Smith, "but the Archbishop of Canterbury." "The lawyers," said Burke, "are only birds of passage in this House of Commons," and then added, with a new figure, "they have their best bower anchor in the House of Lords."

Another stride that has been taken appears in the perishing of heraldry. Whilst the privileges of nobility are passing to the middle class, the badge is discredited and the titles of lordship are getting musty and cumbersome. I wonder that sensible men have not been already impatient of them. They belong, with wigs, powder and scarlet coats, to an earlier age and may be advanta-

geously consigned, with paint and tattoo, to the dignitaries of Australia and Polynesia.

A multitude of English, educated at the universities, bred into their society with manners, ability and the gifts of fortune, are every day confronting the peers on a footing of equality, and outstripping them, as often, in the race of honor and influence. That cultivated class is large and ever enlarging. It is computed that, with titles and without, there are seventy thousand of these people coming and going in London, who make up what is called high society. They cannot shut their eyes to the fact that an untitled nobility possess all the power without the inconveniences that belong to rank, and the rich Englishman goes over the world at the present day, drawing more than all the advantages which the strongest of his kings could command.

CHAPTER XII

UNIVERSITIES

OF British universities, Cambridge has the most illustrious names on its list. At the present day too, it has the advantage of Oxford, counting in its *alumni* a greater number of distinguished scholars. I regret that I had but a single day wherein to see King's College Chapel, the beautiful lawns and gardens of the colleges, and a few of its gownsmen.

But I availed myself of some repeated invitations to Oxford, where I had introductions to Dr. Daubeny, Professor of Botany, and to the Regius Professor of Divinity, as well as to a valued friend, a Fellow of Oriel, and went thither on the last day of March, 1848. I was the guest of my friend in Oriel, was housed close upon that college, and I lived on college hospitalities.[1]

My new friends showed me their cloisters, the Bodleian Library, the Randolph Gallery, Merton Hall and the rest. I saw several faithful, high-minded young men, some of them in the mood of making sacrifices for peace of mind, — a topic, of course, on which I had no counsel to offer. Their affectionate and gregarious ways

reminded me at once of the habits of *our* Cambridge men, though I imputed to these English an advantage in their secure and polished manners. The halls are rich with oaken wainscoting and ceiling. The pictures of the founders hang from the walls; the tables glitter with plate. A youth came forward to the upper table and pronounced the ancient form of grace before meals, which, I suppose, has been in use here for ages, *Benedictus, benedicat; benedicitur, benedicatur.*[1]

It is a curious proof of the English use and wont, or of their good nature, that these young men are locked up every night at nine o'clock, and the porter at each hall is required to give the name of any belated student who is admitted after that hour. Still more descriptive is the fact that out of twelve hundred young men, comprising the most spirited of the aristocracy, a duel has never occurred.

Oxford is old, even in England, and conservative. Its foundations date from Alfred and even from Arthur, if, as is alleged, the Pheryllt of the Druids had a seminary here. In the reign of Edward I., it is pretended, here were thirty thousand students; and nineteen most noble foundations were then established. Chaucer found it as firm as if it had always stood; and it is, in Brit-

ish story, rich with great names, the school of the island and the link of England to the learned of Europe. Hither came Erasmus, with delight, in 1497.[1] Albericus Gentilis, in 1580, was relieved and maintained by the university.[2] Albert Alaskie, a noble Polonian, Prince of Sirad, who visited England to admire the wisdom of Queen Elizabeth, was entertained with stage-plays in the Refectory of Christ-Church in 1583. Isaac Casaubon, coming from Henri Quatre of France by invitation of James I., was admitted to Christ-Church, in July, 1613.[3] I saw the Ashmolean Museum, whither Elias Ashmole in 1682 sent twelve cart-loads of rarities. Here indeed was the Olympia of all Antony Wood's and Aubrey's games and heroes, and every inch of ground has its lustre. For Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, or calendar of the writers of Oxford for two hundred years, is a lively record of English manners and merits, and as much a national monument as Purchas's Pilgrims or Hansard's Register. On every side, Oxford is redolent of age and authority. Its gates shut of themselves against modern innovation.[4] It is still governed by the statutes of Archbishop Laud. The books in Merton Library are still chained to the wall. Here, on August 27, 1660, John Milton's *Pro*

Populo Anglicano Defensio and *Iconoclastes* were committed to the flames. I saw the school-court or quadrangle where, in 1683, the Convocation caused the Leviathan of Thomas Hobbes to be publicly burnt.[1] I do not know whether this learned body have yet heard of the Declaration of American Independence, or whether the Ptolemaic astronomy does not still hold its ground against the novelties of Copernicus.

As many sons, almost so many benefactors. It is usual for a nobleman, or indeed for almost every wealthy student, on quitting college to leave behind him some article of plate; and gifts of all values, from a hall or a fellowship or a library, down to a picture or a spoon, are continually accruing, in the course of a century. My friend Doctor J. gave me the following anecdote. In Sir Thomas Lawrence's collection at London were the cartoons of Raphael and Michael Angelo. This inestimable prize was offered to Oxford University for seven thousand pounds. The offer was accepted, and the committee charged with the affair had collected three thousand pounds, when, among other friends they called on Lord Eldon. Instead of a hundred pounds, he surprised them by putting down his name for three thousand pounds. They told

him they should now very easily raise the remainder. "No," he said, "your men have probably already contributed all they can spare; I can as well give the rest:" and he withdrew his cheque for three thousand, and wrote four thousand pounds. I saw the whole collection in April, 1848.

In the Bodleian Library, Dr. Bandinel showed me the manuscript Plato, of the date of A. D. 896, brought by Dr. Clarke from Egypt; a manuscript Virgil of the same century; the first Bible printed at Mentz (I believe in 1450); and a duplicate of the same, which had been deficient in about twenty leaves at the end. But one day, being in Venice, he bought a room full of books and manuscripts, — every scrap and fragment, — for four thousand louis d'ors, and had the doors locked and sealed by the consul. On proceeding afterwards to examine his purchase, he found the twenty deficient pages of his Mentz Bible, in perfect order; brought them to Oxford with the rest of his purchase, and placed them in the volume; but has too much awe for the Providence that appears in bibliography also, to suffer the reunited parts to be re-bound. The oldest building here is two hundred years younger than the frail manuscript brought by

Dr. Clarke from Egypt. No candle or fire is ever lighted in the Bodleian. Its catalogue is the standard catalogue on the desk of every library in Oxford. In each several college they underscore in red ink on this catalogue the titles of books contained in the library of that college, — the theory being that the Bodleian has all books. This rich library spent during the last year (1847), for the purchase of books, £1668.

The logical English train a scholar as they train an engineer. Oxford is a Greek factory, as Wilton mills weave carpet and Sheffield grinds steel. They know the use of a tutor, as they know the use of a horse; and they draw the greatest amount of benefit out of both. The reading men are kept, by hard walking, hard riding and measured eating and drinking, at the top of their condition, and two days before the examination, do no work, but lounge, ride, or run, to be fresh on the college doomsday. Seven years' residence is the theoretic period for a master's degree. In point of fact, it has long been three years' residence, and four years more of standing. This "three years" is about twenty-one months in all.[1]

"The whole expense," says Professor Sewel,

"of ordinary college tuition at Oxford, is about sixteen guineas a year." But this plausible statement may deceive a reader unacquainted with the fact that the principal teaching relied on is private tuition. And the expenses of private tuition are reckoned at from £50 to £70 a year, or $1000 for the whole course of three years and a half. At Cambridge, $750 a year is economical, and $1500 not extravagant.[1]

The number of students and of residents, the dignity of the authorities, the value of the foundations, the history and the architecture, the known sympathy of entire Britain in what is done there, justify a dedication to study in the undergraduate such as cannot easily be in America, where his college is half suspected by the Freshman to be insignificant in the scale beside trade and politics. Oxford is a little aristocracy in itself, numerous and dignified enough to rank with other estates in the realm; and where fame and secular promotion are to be had for study, and in a direction which has the unanimous respect of all cultivated nations.

This aristocracy, of course, repairs its own losses; fills places, as they fall vacant, from the body of students. The number of fellowships at Oxford is 540, averaging £200 a year, with

lodging and diet at the college. If a young American, loving learning and hindered by poverty, were offered a home, a table, the walks and the library in one of these academical palaces, and a thousand dollars a year, as long as he chose to remain a bachelor, he would dance for joy. Yet these young men thus happily placed, and paid to read, are impatient of their few checks, and many of them preparing to resign their fellowships. They shuddered at the prospect of dying a Fellow, and they pointed out to me a paralytic old man, who was assisted into the hall. As the number of undergraduates at Oxford is only about 1200 or 1300, and many of these are never competitors, the chance of a fellowship is very great. The income of the nineteen colleges is conjectured at £150,000 a year.

The effect of this drill is the radical knowledge of Greek and Latin and of mathematics, and the solidity and taste of English criticism. Whatever luck there may be in this or that award, an Eton captain can write Latin longs and shorts, can turn the Court-Guide into hexameters, and it is certain that a Senior Classic can quote correctly from the *Corpus Poetarum* and is critically learned in all the humanities. Greek

erudition exists on the Isis and Cam, whether the Maud man or the Brasenose man be properly ranked or not; the atmosphere is loaded with Greek learning; the whole river has reached a certain height, and kills all that growth of weeds which this Castalian water kills. The English nature takes culture kindly. So Milton thought. It refines the Norseman. Access to the Greek mind lifts his standard of taste. He has enough to think of, and, unless of an impulsive nature, is indisposed from writing or speaking, by the fulness of his mind and the new severity of his taste. The great silent crowd of thoroughbred Grecians always known to be around him, the English writer cannot ignore. They prune his orations and point his pen. Hence the style and tone of English journalism. The men have learned accuracy and comprehension, logic, and pace, or speed of working. They have bottom, endurance, wind. When born with good constitutions, they make those eupeptic studying-mills, the cast-iron men, the *dura ilia*, whose powers of performance compare with ours as the steam-hammer with the music-box;[1] — Cokes, Mansfields, Seldens and Bentleys, and when it happens that a superior brain puts a rider on this admirable horse, we obtain

those masters of the world who combine the highest energy in affairs with a supreme culture.

It is contended by those who have been bred t Eton, Harrow, Rugby and Westminster, hat the public sentiment within each of those ;chools is high-toned and manly ; that, in their playgrounds, courage is universally admired, meanness despised, manly feelings and generous conduct are encouraged : that an unwritten code of honor deals to the spoiled child of rank and to the child of upstart wealth, an even-handed justice, purges their nonsense out of both and does all that can be done to make them gentlemen.

Again, at the universities, it is urged that all goes to form what England values as the flower of its national life, — a well-educated gentleman. The German Huber, in describing to his countrymen the attributes of an English gentleman, frankly admits that " in Germany, we have nothing of the kind. A gentleman must possess a political character, an independent and public position, or at least the right of assuming it. He must have average opulence, either of his own, or in his family. He should also have bodily activity and strength, unattainable by our

sedentary life in public offices. The race of English gentlemen presents an appearance of manly vigor and form not elsewhere to be found among an equal number of persons. No other nation produces the stock. And in England, it has deteriorated. The university is a decided presumption in any man's favor. And so eminent are the members that a glance at the calendars will show that in all the world one cannot be in better company than on the books of one of the larger Oxford or Cambridge colleges." [1]

These seminaries are finishing schools for the upper classes, and not for the poor. The useful is exploded. The definition of a public school is "a school which excludes all that could fit a man for standing behind a counter." [2]

No doubt, the foundations have been perverted. Oxford, which equals in wealth several of the smaller European states, shuts up the lectureships which were made "public for all men thereunto to have concourse;" mis-spends the revenues bestowed for such youths "as should be most meet for towardness, poverty and painfulness;" there is gross favoritism; many chairs and many fellowships are made beds of ease; and it is likely that the university will know how to resist and make inoperative the terrors of parlia-

mentary inquiry; no doubt their learning is grown obsolete; — but Oxford also has its merits, and I found here also proof of the national fidelity and thoroughness. Such knowledge as they prize they possess and impart. Whether in course or by indirection, whether by a cramming tutor or by examiners with prizes and foundational scholarships, education, according to the English notion of it, is arrived at. I looked over the Examination Papers of the year 1848, for the various scholarships and fellowships, the Lusby, the Hertford, the Dean-Ireland and the University (copies of which were kindly given me by a Greek professor), containing the tasks which many competitors had victoriously performed, and I believed they would prove too severe tests for the candidates for a Bachelor's degree in Yale or Harvard. And in general, here was proof of a more searching study in the appointed directions, and the knowledge pretended to be conveyed was conveyed. Oxford sends out yearly twenty or thirty very able men and three or four hundred well-educated men.

The diet and rough exercise secure a certain amount of old Norse power. A fop will fight, and in exigent circumstances will play the manly

part. In seeing these youths I believed I saw already an advantage in vigor and color and general habit, over their contemporaries in the American colleges.[1] No doubt much of the power and brilliancy of the reading-men is merely constitutional or hygienic. With a hardier habit and resolute gymnastics, with five miles more walking, or five ounces less eating, or with a saddle and gallop of twenty miles a day, with skating and rowing-matches, the American would arrive at as robust exegesis and cheery and hilarious tone. I should readily concede these advantages, which it would be easy to acquire, if I did not find also that they read better than we, and write better.

English wealth falling on their school and university training, makes a systematic reading of the best authors, and to the end of a knowledge how the things whereof they treat really stand: whilst pamphleteer or journalist, reading for an argument for a party, or reading to write, or at all events for some by-end imposed on them, must read meanly and fragmentarily. Charles I. said that he understood English law as well as a gentleman ought to understand it.

Then they have access to books; the rich libraries collected at every one of many thou-

sands of houses, give an advantage not to be attained by a youth in this country, when one thinks how much more and better may be learned by a scholar who, immediately on hearing of a book, can consult it, than by one who is on the quest, for years, and reads inferior books because he cannot find the best.

Again, the great number of cultivated men keep each other up to a high standard. The habit of meeting well-read and knowing men teaches the art of omission and selection.

Universities are of course hostile to geniuses, which, seeing and using ways of their own, discredit the routine: as churches and monasteries persecute youthful saints. Yet we all send our sons to college, and though he be a genius, the youth must take his chance. The university must be retrospective. The gale that gives direction to the vanes on all its towers blows out of antiquity. Oxford is a library, and the professors must be librarians. And I should as soon think of quarrelling with the janitor for not magnifying his office by hostile sallies into the street, like the Governor of Kertch or Kinburn,[1] as of quarrelling with the professors for not admiring the young neologists who pluck the beards of Euclid and Aristotle, or for not attempting them-

selves to fill their vacant shelves as original writers.

It is easy to carp at colleges, and the college, if we will wait for it, will have its own turn. Genius exists there also, but will not answer a call of a committee of the House of Commons. It is rare, precarious, eccentric and darkling. England is the land of mixture and surprise, and when you have settled it that the universities are moribund, out comes a poetic influence from the heart of Oxford,[1] to mould the opinions of cities, to build their houses as simply as birds their nests, to give veracity to art and charm mankind, as an appeal to moral order always must. But besides this restorative genius, the best poetry of England of this age, in the old forms, comes from two graduates at Cambridge.[2]

CHAPTER XIII

RELIGION

NO people at the present day can be explained by their national religion. They do not feel responsible for it; it lies far outside of them. Their loyalty to truth and their labor and expenditure rest on real foundations, and not on a national church. And English life, it is evident, does not grow out of the Athanasian creed, or the Articles, or the Eucharist. It is with religion as with marriage. A youth marries in haste; afterwards, when his mind is opened to the reason of the conduct of life, he is asked what he thinks of the institution of marriage and of the right relations of the sexes? 'I should have much to say,' he might reply, 'if the question were open, but I have a wife and children, and all question is closed for me.' In the barbarous days of a nation, some *cultus* is formed or imported; altars are built, tithes are paid, priests ordained. The education and expenditure of the country take that direction, and when wealth, refinement, great men, and ties to the world supervene, its prudent men say, Why fight against Fate, or lift these absurdities which are

now mountainous? Better find some niche or crevice in this mountain of stone which religious ages have quarried and carved, wherein to bestow yourself, than attempt anything ridiculously and dangerously above your strength, like removing it.[1]

In seeing old castles and cathedrals, I sometimes say, as to-day in front of Dundee Church tower, which is eight hundred years old, 'This was built by another and a better race than any that now look on it.'[2] And plainly there has been great power of sentiment at work in this island, of which these buildings are the proofs; as volcanic basalts show the work of fire which has been extinguished for ages. England felt the full heat of the Christianity which fermented Europe, and drew, like the chemistry of fire, a firm line between barbarism and culture. The power of the religious sentiment put an end to human sacrifices, checked appetite, inspired the crusades, inspired resistance to tyrants, inspired self-respect, set bounds to serfdom and slavery, founded liberty, created the religious architecture, — York, Newstead, Westminster, Fountains Abbey, Ripon, Beverley and Dundee, — works to which the key is lost, with the sentiment which created them; inspired the English

Bible, the liturgy, the monkish histories, the chronicle of Richard of Devizes.[1] The priest translated the Vulgate, and translated the sanctities of old hagiology into English virtues on English ground. It was a certain affirmative or aggressive state of the Caucasian races. Man awoke refreshed by the sleep of ages. The violence of the northern savages exasperated Christianity into power. It lived by the love of the people. Bishop Wilfrid manumitted two hundred and fifty serfs, whom he found attached to the soil. The clergy obtained respite from labor for the boor on the Sabbath and on church festivals. "The lord who compelled his boor to labor between sunset on Saturday and sunset on Sunday, forfeited him altogether." The priest came out of the people and sympathized with his class. The church was the mediator, check and democratic principle, in Europe. Latimer, Wicliffe, Arundel, Cobham, Antony Parsons, Sir Harry Vane, George Fox, Penn, Bunyan are the democrats, as well as the saints of their times. The Catholic Church, thrown on this toiling, serious people, has made in fourteen centuries a massive system, close fitted to the manners and genius of the country, at once domestical and stately. In the long time, it has blended with

everything in heaven above and the earth beneath. It moves through a zodiac of feasts and fasts, names every day of the year, every town and market and headland and monument, and has coupled itself with the almanac, that no court can be held, no field ploughed, no horse shod, without some leave from the church. All maxims of prudence or shop or farm are fixed and dated by the church. Hence its strength in the agricultural districts. The distribution of land into parishes enforces a church sanction to every civil privilege; and the gradation of the clergy, — prelates for the rich and curates for the poor, — with the fact that a classical education has been secured to the clergyman, makes them "the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age."[1]

The English Church has many certificates to show of humble effective service in humanizing the people, in cheering and refining men, feeding, healing and educating. It has the seal of martyrs and confessors; the noblest books; a sublime architecture; a ritual marked by the same secular merits, nothing cheap or purchasable.

From this slow-grown church important reactions proceed; much for culture, much for

giving a direction to the nation's affection and will to-day. The carved and pictured chapel — its entire surface animated with image and emblem — made the parish-church a sort of book and Bible to the people's eye.

Then, when the Saxon instinct had secured a service in the vernacular tongue, it was the tutor and university of the people. In York minster, on the day of the enthronization of the new archbishop, I heard the service of evening prayer read and chanted in the choir. It was strange to hear the pretty pastoral of the betrothal of Rebecca and Isaac, in the morning of the world, read with circumstantiality in York minster, on the 13th January, 1848, to the decorous English audience, just fresh from the Times newspaper and their wine, and listening with all the devotion of national pride. That was binding old and new to some purpose. The reverence for the Scriptures is an element of civilization, for thus has the history of the world been preserved and is preserved. Here in England every day a chapter of Genesis, and a leader in the Times.

Another part of the same service on this occasion was not insignificant. Handel's coronation anthem, *God save the King*, was played by

Dr. Camidge on the organ, with sublime effect. The minster and the music were made for each other. It was a hint of the part the church plays as a political engine. From his infancy, every Englishman is accustomed to hear daily prayers for the Queen, for the royal family and the Parliament, by name; and this lifelong consecration cannot be without influence on his opinions.

The universities also are parcel of the ecclesiastical system, and their first design is to form the clergy. Thus the clergy for a thousand years have been the scholars of the nation.

The national temperament deeply enjoys the unbroken order and tradition of its church; the liturgy, ceremony, architecture; the sober grace, the good company, the connection with the throne and with history, which adorn it. And whilst it endears itself thus to men of more taste than activity, the stability of the English nation is passionately enlisted to its support, from its inextricable connection with the cause of public order, with politics and with the funds.[1]

Good churches are not built by bad men; at least there must be probity and enthusiasm somewhere in the society. These minsters were neither built nor filled by atheists. No church

has had more learned, industrious or devoted men; plenty of "clerks and bishops, who, out of their gowns, would turn their backs on no man."[1] Their architecture still glows with faith in immortality. Heats and genial periods arrive in history, or, shall we say, plenitudes of Divine Presence, by which high tides are caused in the human spirit, and great virtues and talents appear, as in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and again in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the nation was full of genius and piety.

But the age of the Wicliffes, Cobhams, Arundels, Beckets; of the Latimers, Mores, Cranmers; of the Taylors, Leightons, Herberts; of the Sherlocks and Butlers, is gone. Silent revolutions in opinion have made it impossible that men like these should return, or find a place in their once sacred stalls. The spirit that dwelt in this church has glided away to animate other activities, and they who come to the old shrines find apes and players rustling the old garments.

The religion of England is part of good-breeding.[2] When you see on the continent the well-dressed Englishman come into his ambassador's chapel and put his face for silent prayer into his smooth-brushed hat, you cannot help

feeling how much national pride prays with him, and the religion of a gentleman. So far is he from attaching any meaning to the words, that he believes himself to have done almost the generous thing, and that it is very condescending in him to pray to God. A great duke said on the occasion of a victory, in the House of Lords, that he thought the Almighty God had not been well used by them, and that it would become their magnanimity, after so great successes, to take order that a proper acknowledgment be made. It is the church of the gentry, but it is not the church of the poor. The operatives do not own it, and gentlemen lately testified in the House of Commons that in their lives they never saw a poor man in a ragged coat inside a church.

The torpidity on the side of religion of the vigorous English understanding shows how much wit and folly can agree in one brain. Their religion is a quotation; their church is a doll; and any examination is interdicted with screams of terror. In good company you expect them to laugh at the fanaticism of the vulgar; but they do not; they are the vulgar.[1]

The English, in common perhaps with Christendom in the nineteenth century, do not respect

power, but only performance; value ideas only for an economic result. Wellington esteems a saint only as far as he can be an army chaplain: "Mr. Briscoll, by his admirable conduct and good sense, got the better of Methodism, which had appeared among the soldiers and once among the officers." They value a philosopher as they value an apothecary who brings bark or a drench; and inspiration is only some blow-pipe, or a finer mechanical aid.

I suspect that there is in an Englishman's brain a valve that can be closed at pleasure, as an engineer shuts off steam. The most sensible and well-informed men possess the power of thinking just so far as the bishop in religious matters, and as the chancellor of the exchequer in politics. They talk with courage and logic, and show you magnificent results, but the same men who have brought free trade or geology to their present standing, look grave and lofty and shut down their valve as soon as the conversation approaches the English Church. After that, you talk with a box-turtle.[1]

The action of the university, both in what is taught and in the spirit of the place, is directed more on producing an English gentleman, than a saint or a psychologist. It ripens a bishop,

and extrudes a philosopher. I do not know that there is more cabalism in the Anglican than in other churches, but the Anglican clergy are identified with the aristocracy. They say here, that if you talk with a clergyman, you are sure to find him well-bred, informed and candid: he entertains your thought or your project with sympathy and praise. But if a second clergyman come in, the sympathy is at an end: two together are inaccessible to your thought, and whenever it comes to action, the clergyman invariably sides with his church.

The Anglican Church is marked by the grace and good sense of its forms, by the manly grace of its clergy. The gospel it preaches is 'By taste are ye saved.' It keeps the old structures in repair, spends a world of money in music and building, and in buying Pugin' and architectural literature. It has a general good name for amenity and mildness. It is not in ordinary a persecuting church; it is not inquisitorial, not even inquisitive; is perfectly well-bred, and can shut its eyes on all proper occasions. If you let it alone, it will let you alone. But its instinct is hostile to all change in politics, literature, or social arts. The church has not been the founder of the London University,

of the Mechanics' Institutes, of the Free School, of whatever aims at diffusion of knowledge. The Platonists of Oxford are as bitter against this heresy, as Thomas Taylor.[1]

The doctrine of the Old Testament is the religion of England.[2] The first leaf of the New Testament it does not open. It believes in a Providence which does not treat with levity a pound sterling. They are neither transcendentalists nor Christians. They put up no Socratic prayer, much less any saintly prayer for the Queen's mind; ask neither for light nor right, but say bluntly, "Grant her in health and wealth long to live." And one traces this Jewish prayer in all English private history, from the prayers of King Richard, in Richard of Devizes' Chronicle,[3] to those in the diaries of Sir Samuel Romilly and of Haydon the painter. "Abroad with my wife," writes Pepys piously, "the first time that ever I rode in my own coach; which do make my heart rejoice and praise God, and pray him to bless it to me, and continue it."[4] The bill for the naturalization of the Jews (in 1753) was resisted by petitions from all parts of the kingdom, and by petition from the city of London, reprobating this bill, as "tending extremely to the dishonor of the Christian reli-

gion, and extremely injurious to the interests and commerce of the kingdom in general, and of the city of London in particular." [1]

But they have not been able to congeal humanity by act of Parliament. "The heavens journey still and sojourn not," and arts, wars, discoveries and opinion go onward at their own pace. The new age has new desires, new enemies, new trades, new charities, and reads the Scriptures with new eyes.[2] The chatter of French politics, the steam-whistle, the hum of the mill and the noise of embarking emigrants had quite put most of the old legends out of mind; so that when you came to read the liturgy to a modern congregation, it was almost absurd in its unfitness, and suggested a masquerade of old costumes.

No chemist has prospered in the attempt to crystallize a religion. It is endogenous, like the skin and other vital organs. A new statement every day. The prophet and apostle knew this, and the nonconformist confutes the conformists, by quoting the texts they must allow. It is the condition of a religion to require religion for its expositor. Prophet and apostle can only be rightly understood by prophet and apostle. The statesman knows that the reli-

gious element will not fail, any more than the supply of fibrine and chyle; but it is in its nature constructive, and will organize such a church as it wants. The wise legislator will spend on temples, schools, libraries, colleges, but will shun the enriching of priests. If in any manner he can leave the election and paying of the priest to the people, he will do well. Like the Quakers, he may resist the separation of a class of priests, and create opportunity and expectation in the society to run to meet natural endowment in this kind. But when wealth accrues to a chaplaincy, a bishopric, or rectorship, it requires moneyed men for its stewards, who will give it another direction than to the mystics of their day. Of course, money will do after its kind, and will steadily work to unspiritualize and unchurch the people to whom it was bequeathed. The class certain to be excluded from all preferment are the religious, — and driven to other churches; which is nature's *vis medicatrix*.

The curates are ill paid, and the prelates are overpaid. This abuse draws into the church the children of the nobility and other unfit persons who have a taste for expense. Thus a bishop is only a surpliced merchant. Through

his lawn I can see the bright buttons of the shopman's coat glitter. A wealth like that of Durham makes almost a premium on felony. Brougham, in a speech in the House of Commons on the Irish elective franchise, said, "How will the reverend bishops of the other house be able to express their due abhorrence of the crime of perjury, who solemnly declare in the presence of God that when they are called upon to accept a living, perhaps of £4000 a year, at that very instant they are moved by the Holy Ghost to accept the office and administration thereof, and for no other reason whatever?" The modes of initiation are more damaging than custom-house oaths. The Bishop is elected by the Dean and Prebends of the cathedral. The Queen sends these gentlemen a *congé d'élire*, or leave to elect; but also sends them the name of the person whom they are to elect. They go into the cathedral, chant and pray and beseech the Holy Ghost to assist them in their choice; and, after these invocations, invariably find that the dictates of the Holy Ghost agree with the recommendations of the Queen.

But you must pay for conformity. All goes well as long as you run with conformists. But you, who are an honest man in other particu-

lars, know that there is alive somewhere a man whose honesty reaches to this point also that he shall not kneel to false gods, and on the day when you meet him, you sink into the class of counterfeits. Besides, this succumbing has grave penalties. If you take in a lie, you must take in all that belongs to it. England accepts this ornamented national church, and it glazes the eyes, bloats the flesh, gives the voice a stertorous clang, and clouds the understanding of the receivers.

The English Church, undermined by German criticism, had nothing left but tradition; and was led logically back to Romanism. But that was an element which only hot heads could breathe: in view of the educated class, generally, it was not a fact to front the sun; and the alienation of such men from the church became complete.[1]

Nature, to be sure, had her remedy. Religious persons are driven out of the Established Church into sects, which instantly rise to credit and hold the Establishment in check.[2] Nature has sharper remedies, also. The English, abhorring change in all things, abhorring it most in matters of religion, cling to the last rag of form, and are dreadfully given to cant. The

English (and I wish it were confined to them, but 't is a taint in the Anglo-Saxon blood in both hemispheres), — the English and the Americans cant beyond all other nations. The French relinquish all that industry to them. What is so odious as the polite bows to God, in our books and newspapers? The popular press is flagitious in the exact measure of its sanctimony, and the religion of the day is a theatrical Sinai, where the thunders are supplied by the property-man. The fanaticism and hypocrisy create satire. Punch finds an inexhaustible material. Dickens writes novels on Exeter-Hall humanity. Thackeray exposes the heartless high life. Nature revenges herself more summarily by the heathenism of the lower classes. Lord Shaftesbury calls the poor thieves together and reads sermons to them, and they call it 'gas.' George Borrow[1] summons the Gypsies to hear his discourse on the Hebrews in Egypt, and reads to them the Apostles' Creed in Romany. "When I had concluded," he says, "I looked around me. The features of the assembly were twisted, and the eyes of all turned upon me with a frightful squint; not an individual present but squinted; the genteel Pepa, the good-humored Chicharona, the Cosdami,

all squinted; the Gypsy jockey squinted worst of all."

The church at this moment is much to be pitied.[1] She has nothing left but possession. If a bishop meets an intelligent gentleman and reads fatal interrogations in his eyes, he has no resource but to take wine with him.[2] False position introduces cant, perjury, simony and ever a lower class of mind and character into the clergy: and, when the hierarchy is afraid of science and education, afraid of piety, afraid of tradition and afraid of theology, there is nothing left but to quit a church which is no longer one.[3]

But the religion of England, — is it the Established Church? no; is it the sects? no; they are only perpetuations of some private man's dissent, and are to the Established Church as cabs are to a coach, cheaper and more convenient, but really the same thing. Where dwells the religion? Tell me first where dwells electricity, or motion, or thought, or gesture. They do not dwell or stay at all. Electricity cannot be made fast, mortared up and ended, like London Monument or the Tower, so that you shall know where to find it, and keep it fixed, as the English do with their things, forevermore; it is

passing, glancing, gesticular; it is a traveller, a newness, a surprise, a secret, which perplexes them and puts them out.[1] Yet, if religion be the doing of all good, and for its sake the suffering of all evil, *souffrir de tout le monde, et ne faire souffrir personne*, that divine secret has existed in England from the days of Alfred to those of Romilly, of Clarkson and of Florence Nightingale, and in thousands who have no fame.

CHAPTER XIV

LITERATURE[1]

A STRONG common sense, which it is not easy to unseat or disturb, marks the English mind for a thousand years: a rude strength newly applied to thought, as of sailors and soldiers who had lately learned to read. They have no fancy, and never are surprised into a covert or witty word, such as pleased the Athenians and Italians, and was convertible into a fable not long after; but they delight in strong earthy expression, not mistakable, coarsely true to the human body, and, though spoken among princes, equally fit and welcome to the mob. This homeliness, veracity and plain style appear in the earliest extant works and in the latest. It imports into songs and ballads the smell of the earth, the breath of cattle, and, like a Dutch painter, seeks a household charm, though by pails and pans. They ask their constitutional utility in verse. The kail and herrings are never out of sight. The poet nimbly recovers himself from every sally of the imagination. The English muse loves the farmyard, the lane and market. She says, with De Staël, "I tramp in the

mire with wooden shoes, whenever they would force me into the clouds." For the Englishman has accurate perceptions; takes hold of things by the right end, and there is no slipperiness in his grasp He loves the axe, the spade, the oar, the gun, the steam-pipe: he has built the engine he uses. He is materialist, economical, mercantile.[1] He must be treated with sincerity and reality; with muffins, and not the promise of muffins; and prefers his hot chop, with perfect security and convenience in the eating of it, to the chances of the amplest and Frenchiest bill of fare, engraved on embossed paper. When he is intellectual, and a poet or a philosopher, he carries the same hard truth and the same keen machinery into the mental sphere. His mind must stand on a fact. He will not be baffled, or catch at clouds, but the mind must have a symbol palpable and resisting. What he relishes in Dante is the vise-like tenacity with which he holds a mental image before the eyes, as if it were a scutcheon painted on a shield. Byron "liked something craggy to break his mind upon." A taste for plain strong speech, what is called a biblical style, marks the English. It is in Alfred and the Saxon Chronicle and in the Sagas of the Northmen. Latimer was homely. Hobbes was

perfect in the "noble vulgar speech." Donne, Bunyan, Milton, Taylor, Evelyn, Pepys, Hooker, Cotton and the translators wrote it. How realistic or materialistic in treatment of his subject is Swift. He describes his fictitious persons as if for the police. Defoe has no insecurity or choice. Hudibras has the same hard mentality, — keeping the truth at once to the senses and to the intellect.

It is not less seen in poetry. Chaucer's hard painting of his Canterbury pilgrims satisfies the senses. Shakspeare, Spenser and Milton, in their loftiest ascents, have this national grip and exactitude of mind. This mental materialism makes the value of English transcendental genius; in these writers and in Herbert, Henry More, Donne and Sir Thomas Browne. The Saxon materialism and narrowness, exalted into the sphere of intellect, makes the very genius of Shakspeare and Milton. When it reaches the pure element, it treads the clouds as securely as the adamant. Even in its elevations materialistic, its poetry is common sense inspired; or iron raised to white heat.

The marriage of the two qualities is in their speech. It is a tacit rule of the language to make the frame or skeleton of Saxon words,

and, when elevation or ornament is sought, to interweave Roman, but sparingly; nor is a sentence made of Roman words alone, without loss of strength. The children and laborers use the Saxon unmixed. The Latin unmixed is abandoned to the colleges and Parliament. Mixture is a secret of the English island; and, in their dialect, the male principle is the Saxon, the female, the Latin; and they are combined in every discourse. A good writer, if he has indulged in a Roman roundness, makes haste to chasten and nerve his period by English monosyllables.[1]

When the Gothic nations came into Europe they found it lighted with the sun and moon of Hebrew and of Greek genius. The tablets of their brain, long kept in the dark, were finely sensible to the double glory. To the images from this twin source (of Christianity and art), the mind became fruitful as by the incubation of the Holy Ghost. The English mind flowered in every faculty. The common sense was surprised and inspired. For two centuries England was philosophic, religious, poetic. The mental furniture seemed of larger scale: the memory capacious like the storehouse of the rains. The ardor and endurance of study, the

boldness and facility of their mental construction, their fancy and imagination and easy spanning of vast distances of thought, the enterprise or accosting of new subjects, and, generally, the easy exertion of power, — astonish, like the legendary feats of Guy of Warwick. The union of Saxon precision and Oriental soaring, of which Shakspeare is the perfect example, is shared in less degree by the writers of two centuries. I find not only the great masters out of all rivalry and reach, but the whole writing of the time charged with a masculine force and freedom.

There is a hygienic simpleness, rough vigor and closeness to the matter in hand even in the second and third class of writers; and, I think, in the common style of the people, as one finds it in the citation of wills, letters and public documents; in proverbs and forms of speech. The more hearty and sturdy expression may indicate that the savageness of the Norseman was not all gone. Their dynamic brains hurled off their words as the revolving stone hurls off scraps of grit. I could cite from the seventeenth century sentences and phrases of edge not to be matched in the nineteenth. Their poets by simple force of mind equalized themselves with the accumu-

lated science of ours. The country gentlemen had a posset or drink they called October; and the poets, as if by this hint, knew how to distil the whole season into their autumnal verses: and as nature, to pique the more, sometimes works up deformities into beauty in some rare Aspasia or Cleopatra; and as the Greek art wrought many a vase or column, in which too long or too lithe, or nodes, or pits and flaws are made a beauty of; — so these were so quick and vital that they could charm and enrich by mean and vulgar objects.

A man must think that age well taught and thoughtful, by which masques and poems, like those of Ben Jonson, full of heroic sentiment in a manly style, were received with favor. The unique fact in literary history, the unsurprised reception of Shakspeare; — the reception proved by his making his fortune; and the apathy proved by the absence of all contemporary panegyric, — seems to demonstrate an elevation in the mind of the people. Judge of the splendor of a nation by the insignificance of great individuals in it.[1] The manner in which they learned Greek and Latin, before our modern facilities were yet ready; without dictionaries, grammars, or indexes, by lectures of a professor, followed by

their own searchings, — required a more robust memory, and coöperation of all the faculties; and their scholars, Camden, Usher, Selden, Mede, Gataker, Hooker, Taylor, Burton, Bentley, Brian Walton, acquired the solidity and method of engineers.[1]

The influence of Plato tinges the British genius. Their minds loved analogy; were cognizant of resemblances, and climbers on the staircase of unity.[2] 'T is a very old strife between those who elect to see identity and those who elect to see discrepancies; and it renews itself in Britain. The poets, of course, are of one part; the men of the world, of the other. But Britain had many disciples of Plato; — More, Hooker, Bacon, Sidney, Lord Brooke, Herbert, Browne, Donne, Spenser, Chapman, Milton, Crashaw, Norris, Cudworth, Berkeley, Jeremy Taylor.

Lord Bacon has the English duality. His centuries of observations on useful science, and his experiments, I suppose, were worth nothing. One hint of Franklin, or Watt, or Dalton, or Davy, or any one who had a talent for experiment, was worth all his lifetime of exquisite trifles. But he drinks of a diviner stream, and marks the influx of idealism into England.[3]

Where that goes, is poetry, health and progress. The rules of its genesis or its diffusion are not known. That knowledge, if we had it, would supersede all that we call science of the mind. It seems an affair of race, or of meta-chemistry; —the vital point being, how far the sense of unity, or instinct of seeking resemblances, predominated. For wherever the mind takes a step, it is to put itself at one with a larger class, discerned beyond the lesser class with which it has been conversant. Hence, all poetry and all affirmative action comes.

Bacon, in the structure of his mind, held of the analogists, of the idealists, or (as we popularly say, naming from the best example) Platonists. Whoever discredits analogy and requires heaps of facts before any theories can be attempted, has no poetic power, and nothing original or beautiful will be produced by him. Locke is as surely the influx of decomposition and of prose, as Bacon and the Platonists of growth. The Platonic is the poetic tendency the so-called scientific is the negative and poisonous. 'T is quite certain that Spenser, Burns, Byron and Wordsworth will be Platonists, and that the dull men will be Lockists. Then politics and commerce will absorb from the educated

class men of talents without genius, precisely because such have no resistance.

Bacon, capable of ideas, yet devoted to ends, required in his map of the mind, first of all, universality, or *prima philosophia;* the receptacle for all such profitable observations and axioms as fall not within the compass of any of the special parts of philosophy, but are more common and of a higher stage.[1] He held this element essential: it is never out of mind: he never spares rebukes for such as neglect it; believing that no perfect discovery can be made in a flat or level, but you must ascend to a higher science. "If any man thinketh philosophy and universality to be idle studies, he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied; and this I take to be a great cause that has hindered the progression of learning, because these fundamental knowledges have been studied but in passage." He explained himself by giving various quaint examples of the summary or common laws of which each science has its own illustration. He complains that "he finds this part of learning very deficient, the profounder sort of wits drawing a bucket now and then for their own use, but the spring-head unvisited. This was the *dry light* which did scorch and

offend most men's watery natures."[1] Plato had signified the same sense, when he said, "All the great arts require a subtle and speculative research into the law of nature, since loftiness of thought and perfect mastery over every subject seem to be derived from some such source as this. This Pericles had, in addition to a great natural genius. For, meeting with Anaxagoras, who was a person of this kind, he attached himself to him, and nourished himself with sublime speculations on the absolute intelligence; and imported thence into the oratorical art whatever could be useful to it."[2]

A few generalizations always circulate in the world, whose authors we do not rightly know, which astonish, and appear to be avenues to vast kingdoms of thought, and these are in the world *constants*, like the Copernican and Newtonian theories in physics. In England these may be traced usually to Shakspeare, Bacon, Milton, or Hooker, even to Van Helmont[3] and Behmen, and do all have a kind of filial retrospect to Plato and the Greeks. Of this kind is Lord Bacon's sentence, that "Nature is commanded by obeying her;" his doctrine of poetry, which "accommodates the shows of things to the desires of the mind," or the Zoroastrian definition of

poetry, mystical, yet exact, "apparent pictures of unapparent natures;"[2] Spenser's creed that "soul is form, and doth the body make;"[2] the theory of Berkeley, that we have no certain assurance of the existence of matter;[3] Doctor Samuel Clarke's argument for theism from the nature of space and time; Harrington's political rule that power must rest on land,[4] — a rule which requires to be liberally interpreted; the theory of Swedenborg, so cosmically applied by him, that the man makes his heaven and hell; Hegel's study of civil history, as the conflict of ideas and the victory of the deeper thought; the identity-philosophy of Schelling, couched in the statement that "all difference is quantitative." So the very announcement of the theory of gravitation, of Kepler's three harmonic laws, and even of Dalton's doctrine of definite proportions, finds a sudden response in the mind, which remains a superior evidence to empirical demonstrations. I cite these generalizations, some of which are more recent, merely to indicate a class. Not these particulars, but the mental plane or the atmosphere from which they emanate was the home and element of the writers and readers in what we loosely call the Elizabethan age (say, in literary history, the period from 1575 to

1625), yet a period almost short enough to justify Ben Jonson's remark on Lord Bacon, — "About his time, and within his view, were born all the wits that could honor a nation, or help study."

Such richness of genius had not existed more than once before. These heights could not be maintained. As we find stumps of vast trees in our exhausted soils, and have received traditions of their ancient fertility to tillage, so history reckons epochs in which the intellect of famed races became effete. So it fared with English genius. These heights were followed by a meanness and a descent of the mind into lower levels; the loss of wings; no high speculation. Locke, to whom the meaning of ideas was unknown, became the type of philosophy, and his "understanding" the measure, in all nations, of the English intellect. His countrymen forsook the lofty sides of Parnassus, on which they had once walked with echoing steps, and disused the studies once so beloved; the powers of thought fell into neglect.[1] The later English want the faculty of Plato and Aristotle, of grouping men in natural classes by an insight of general laws, so deep that the rule is deduced with equal precision from few subjects, or from one, as from

multitudes of lives. Shakspeare is supreme in that, as in all the great mental energies. The Germans generalize : the English cannot interpret the German mind.[1] German science comprehends the English. The absence of the faculty in England is shown by the timidity which accumulates mountains of facts, as a bad general wants myriads of men and miles of redoubts to compensate the inspirations of courage and conduct.

The English shrink from a generalization. " They do not look abroad into universality, or they draw only a bucketful at the fountain of the First Philosophy for their occasion, and do not go to the spring-head." Bacon, who said this, is almost unique among his countrymen in that faculty ; at least among the prose-writers. Milton, who was the stair or high table-land to let down the English genius from the summits of Shakspeare, used this privilege sometimes in poetry, more rarely in prose. For a long interval afterwards, it is not found. Burke was addicted to generalizing, but his was a shorter line ; as his thoughts have less depth, they have less compass. Hume's abstractions are not deep or wise. He owes his fame to one keen observation, that no copula had been detected between

any cause and effect, either in physics or in thought; that the term cause and effect was loosely or gratuitously applied to what we know only as consecutive, not at all as causal.[1] Doctor Johnson's written abstractions have little value; the tone of feeling in them makes their chief worth.

Mr. Hallam, a learned and elegant scholar, has written the history of European literature for three centuries, — a performance of great ambition, inasmuch as a judgment was to be attempted on every book. But his eye does not reach to the ideal standards: the verdicts are all dated from London; all new thought must be cast into the old moulds. The expansive element which creates literature is steadily denied. Plato is resisted, and his school. Hallam is uniformly polite, but with deficient sympathy; writes with resolute generosity, but is unconscious of the deep worth which lies in the mystics, and which often outvalues as a seed of power and a source of revolution all the correct writers and shining reputations of their day. He passes in silence, or dismisses with a kind of contempt, the profounder masters: a lover of ideas is not only uncongenial, but unintelligible.[2] Hallam inspires respect by his know-

ledge and fidelity, by his manifest love of good books, and he lifts himself to own better than almost any the greatness of Shakspeare, and better than Johnson he appreciates Milton. But in Hallam, or in the firmer intellectual nerve of Mackintosh, one still finds the same type of English genius. It is wise and rich, but it lives on its capital. It is retrospective. How can it discern and hail the new forms that are looming up on the horizon, new and gigantic thoughts which cannot dress themselves out of any old wardrobe of the past?

The essays, the fiction and the poetry of the day have the like municipal limits. Dickens, with preternatural apprehension of the language of manners and the varieties of street life; with pathos and laughter, with patriotic and still enlarging generosity, writes London tracts. He is a painter of English details, like Hogarth; local and temporary in his tints and style, and local in his aims. Bulwer, an industrious writer, with occasional ability, is distinguished for his reverence of intellect as a temporality, and appeals to the worldly ambition of the student. His romances tend to fan these low flames. Their novelists despair of the heart. Thackeray finds that God has made no allowance for the

poor thing in his universe, — more 's the pity, he thinks, — but 't is not for us to be wiser; we must renounce ideals and accept London.[1]

The brilliant Macaulay, who expresses the tone of the English governing classes of the day, explicitly teaches that *good* means good to eat, good to wear, material commodity; that the glory of modern philosophy is its direction on "fruit;" to yield economical inventions; and that its merit is to avoid ideas and avoid morals.[2] He thinks it the distinctive merit of the Baconian philosophy in its triumph over the old Platonic, its disentangling the intellect from theories of the all-Fair and all-Good, and pinning it down to the making a better sick chair and a better wine-whey for an invalid; — this not ironically, but in good faith; — that, "solid advantage," as he calls it, meaning always sensual benefit, is the only good. The eminent benefit of astronomy is the better navigation it creates to enable the fruit-ships to bring home their lemons and wine to the London grocer. It was a curious result, in which the civility and religion of England for a thousand years ends in denying morals and reducing the intellect to a sauce-pan. The critic hides his skepticism under the English cant of practical. To con-

vince the reason, to touch the conscience, is romantic pretension. The fine arts fall to the ground. Beauty, except as luxurious commodity, does not exist. It is very certain, I may say in passing, that if Lord Bacon had been only the sensualist his critic pretends, he would never have acquired the fame which now entitles him to this patronage. It is because he had imagination, the leisures of the spirit, and basked in an element of contemplation out of all modern English atmospheric gauges, that he is impressive to the imaginations of men and has become a potentate not to be ignored. Sir David Brewster[1] sees the high place of Bacon, without finding Newton indebted to him, and thinks it a mistake. Bacon occupies it by specific gravity or levity, not by any feat he did, or by any tutoring more or less of Newton, etc., but as an effect of the same cause which showed itself more pronounced afterwards in Hooke, Boyle and Halley.[2]

Coleridge, a catholic mind, with a hunger for ideas; with eyes looking before and after to the highest bards and sages, and who wrote and spoke the only high criticism in his time, is one of those who save England from the reproach of no longer possessing the capacity to appreciate

what rarest wit the island has yielded. Yet the misfortune of his life, his vast attempts but most inadequate performings, failing to accomplish any one masterpiece, — seems to mark the closing of an era.' Even in him, the traditional Englishman was too strong for the philosopher, and he fell into *accommodations;* and as Burke had striven to idealize the English State, so Coleridge 'narrowed his mind' in the attempt to reconcile the Gothic rule and dogma of the Anglican Church, with eternal ideas. But for Coleridge, and a lurking taciturn minority uttering itself in occasional criticism, oftener in private discourse, one would say that in Germany and in America is the best mind in England rightly respected. It is the surest sign of national decay, when the Bramins can no longer read or understand the Braminical philosophy.

In the decomposition and asphyxia that followed all this materialism, Carlyle was driven by his disgust at the pettiness and the cant, into the preaching of Fate. In comparison with all this rottenness, any check, any cleansing, though by fire, seemed desirable and beautiful. He saw little difference in the gladiators, or "the causes" for which they combated; the one comfort was, that they were all going speedily into

the abyss together. And his imagination, finding no nutriment in any creation, avenged itself by celebrating the majestic beauty of the laws of decay. The necessities of mental structure force all minds into a few categories; and where impatience of the tricks of men makes Nemesis amiable, and builds altars to the negative Deity, the inevitable recoil is to heroism or the gallantry of the private heart, which decks its immolation with glory, in the unequal combat of will against fate.[1]

Wilkinson, the editor of Swedenborg, the annotator of Fourier and the champion of Hahnemann, has brought to metaphysics and to physiology a native vigor, with a catholic perception of relations, equal to the highest attempts, and a rhetoric like the armory of the invincible knights of old. There is in the action of his mind a long Atlantic roll not known except in deepest waters, and only lacking what ought to accompany such powers, a manifest centrality. If his mind does not rest in immovable biases, perhaps the orbit is larger and the return is not yet: but a master should inspire a confidence that he will adhere to his convictions and give his present studies always the same high place.[2]

It would be easy to add exceptions to the limitary tone of English thought, and much more easy to adduce examples of excellence in particular veins; and if, going out of the region of dogma, we pass into that of general culture, there is no end to the graces and amenities, wit, sensibility and erudition of the learned class. But the artificial succor which marks all English performance appears in letters also: much of their æsthetic production is antiquarian and manufactured, and literary reputations have been achieved by forcible men, whose relation to literature was purely accidental, but who were driven by tastes and modes they found in vogue into their several careers. So, at this moment, every ambitious young man studies geology: so members of Parliament are made, and churchmen.

The bias of Englishmen to practical skill has reacted on the national mind. They are incapable of an inutility, and respect the five mechanic powers even in their song.[1] The voice of their modern muse has a slight hint of the steam-whistle, and the poem is created as an ornament and finish of their monarchy, and by no means as the bird of a new morning which forgets the past world in the full enjoyment of that which

is forming. They are with difficulty ideal; they are the most conditioned men, as if, having the best conditions, they could not bring themselves to forfeit them. Every one of them is a thousand years old and lives by his memory: and when you say this, they accept it as praise.

Nothing comes to the book-shops but politics, travels, statistics, tabulation and engineering; and even what is called philosophy and letters is mechanical in its structure, as if inspiration had ceased, as if no vast hope, no religion, no song of joy, no wisdom, no analogy existed any more. The tone of colleges and of scholars and of literary society has this mortal air. I seem to walk on a marble floor, where nothing will grow. They exert every variety of talent on a lower ground and may be said to live and act in a sub-mind. They have lost all commanding views in literature, philosophy and science.[1] A good Englishman shuts himself out of three fourths of his mind and confines himself to one fourth. He has learning, good sense, power of labor, and logic; but a faith in the laws of the mind like that of Archimedes; a belief like that of Euler and Kepler, that experience must follow and not lead the laws of the mind, a devotion to the theory of politics like that of

Hooker and Milton and Harrington, the modern English mind repudiates.

I fear the same fault lies in their science, since they have known how to make it repulsive and bereave nature of its charm; — though perhaps the complaint flies wider, and the vice attaches to many more than to British physicists. The eye of the naturalist must have a scope like nature itself, a susceptibility to all impressions, alive to the heart as well as to the logic of creation. But English science puts humanity to the door. It wants the connection which is the test of genius. The science is false by not being poetic. It isolates the reptile or mollusk it assumes to explain; whilst reptile or mollusk only exists in system, in relation. The poet only sees it as an inevitable step in the path of the Creator. But, in England, one hermit finds this fact, and another finds that, and lives and dies ignorant of its value. There are great exceptions, of John Hunter, a man of ideas; perhaps of Robert Brown, the botanist; and of Richard Owen, who has imported into Britain the German homologies, and enriched science with contributions of his own, adding sometimes the divination of the old masters to the unbroken power of labor in the English mind. But for the most part the

natural science in England is out of its loyal alliance with morals, and is as void of imagination and free play of thought as conveyancing. It stands in strong contrast with the genius of the Germans, those semi-Greeks, who love analogy, and, by means of their height of view, preserve their enthusiasm and think for Europe.[1]

No hope, no sublime augury cheers the student, no secure striding from experiment onward to a foreseen law, but only a casual dipping here and there, like diggers in California "prospecting for a placer" that will pay.[2] A horizon of brass of the diameter of his umbrella shuts down around his senses. Squalid contentment with conventions, satire at the names of philosophy and religion, parochial and shop-till politics, and idolatry of usage, betray the ebb of life and spirit. As they trample on nationalities to reproduce London and Londoners in Europe and Asia, so they fear the hostility of ideas, of poetry, of religion, — ghosts which they cannot lay; and, having attempted to domesticate and dress the Blessed Soul itself in English broadcloth and gaiters, they are tormented with fear that herein lurks a force that will sweep their system away. The artists say, "Nature puts them out;" the scholars have become unideal

They parry earnest speech with banter and levity; they laugh you down, or they change the subject. "The fact is," say they over their wine, "all that about liberty, and so forth, is gone by; it won't do any longer." The practical and comfortable oppress them with inexorable claims, and the smallest fraction of power remains for heroism and poetry. No poet dares murmur of beauty out of the precinct of his rhymes. No priest dares hint at a Providence which does not respect English utility. The island is a roaring volcano of fate, of material values, of tariffs and laws of repression, glutted markets and low prices.

In the absence of the highest aims, of the pure love of knowledge and the surrender to nature, there is the suppression of the imagination, the priapism of the senses and the understanding; we have the factitious instead of the natural; tasteless expense, arts of comfort, and the rewarding as an illustrious inventor whosoever will contrive one impediment more to interpose between the man and his objects.[1]

Thus poetry is degraded and made ornamental. Pope and his school wrote poetry fit to put round frosted cake. What did Walter Scott write without stint? a rhymed traveller's guide

to Scotland.' And the libraries of verses they print have this Birmingham character. How many volumes of well-bred metre we must jingle through, before we can be filled, taught, renewed! We want the miraculous; the beauty which we can manufacture at no mill, — can give no account of; the beauty of which Chaucer and Chapman had the secret. The poetry of course is low and prosaic; only now and then, as in Wordsworth, conscientious; or in Byron, passional; or in Tennyson, factitious. But if I should count the poets who have contributed to the Bible of existing England sentences of guidance and consolation which are still glowing and effective, — how few! Shall I find my heavenly bread in the reigning poets? Where is great design in modern English poetry? The English have lost sight of the fact that poetry exists to speak the spiritual law, and that no wealth of description or of fancy is yet essentially new and out of the limits of prose, until this condition is reached. Therefore the grave old poets, like the Greek artists, heeded their designs, and less considered the finish. It was their office to lead to the divine sources, out of which all this, and much more, readily springs: and, if this religion is in the poetry, it raises us

to some purpose and we can well afford some staidness or hardness, or want of popular tune in the verses.

The exceptional fact of the period is the genius of Wordsworth. He had no master but nature and solitude. "He wrote a poem," says Landor, "without the aid of war." His verse is the voice of sanity in a worldly and ambitious age. One regrets that his temperament was not more liquid and musical. He has written longer than he was inspired. But for the rest, he has no competitor.[1]

Tennyson is endowed precisely in points where Wordsworth wanted. There is no finer ear, nor more command of the keys of language. Color, like the dawn, flows over the horizon from his pencil, in waves so rich that we do not miss the central form. Through all his refinements, too, he has reached the public, — a certificate of good sense and general power, since he who aspires to be the English poet must be as large as London, not in the same kind as London, but in his own kind. But he wants a subject, and climbs no mount of vision to bring its secrets to the people. He contents himself with describing the Englishman as he is, and proposes no better. There are all de-

grees in poetry and we must be thankful for every beautiful talent. But it is only a first success, when the ear is gained. The best office of the best poets has been to show how low and uninspired was their general style, and that only once or twice they have struck the high chord.[1]

That expansiveness which is the essence of the poetic element, they have not. It was no Oxonian, but Hafiz, who said, "Let us be crowned with roses, let us drink wine, and break up the tiresome old roof of heaven into new forms." A stanza of the song of nature the Oxonian has no ear for, and he does not value the salient and curative influence of intellectual action, studious of truth without a by-end.

By the law of contraries, I look for an irresistible taste for Orientalism in Britain. For a self-conceited modish life, made up of trifles, clinging to a corporeal civilization, hating ideas, there is no remedy like the Oriental largeness. That astonishes and disconcerts English decorum. For once, there is thunder it never heard, light it never saw, and power which trifles with time and space. I am not surprised then to find an Englishman like Warren Hastings, who had been struck with the grand style of thinking in the Indian writings, deprecating

the prejudices of his countrymen while offering them a translation of the Bhagvat. "Might I, an unlettered man, venture to prescribe bounds to the latitude of criticism, I should exclude, in estimating the merit of such a production, all rules drawn from the ancient or modern literature of Europe, all references to such sentiments or manners as are become the standards of propriety for opinion and action in our own modes, and, equally, all appeals to our revealed tenets of religion and moral duty."[1] He goes to bespeak indulgence to "ornaments of fancy unsuited to our taste, and passages elevated to a tract of sublimity into which our habits of judgment will find it difficult to pursue them."

Meantime, I know that a retrieving power lies in the English race which seems to make any recoil possible; in other words, there is at all times a minority of profound minds existing in the nation, capable of appreciating every soaring of intellect and every hint of tendency. While the constructive talent seems dwarfed and superficial, the criticism is often in the noblest tone and suggests the presence of the invisible gods. I can well believe what I have often heard, that there are two nations in England; but it is not the Poor and the Rich, nor

is it the Normans and Saxons, nor the Celt and the Goth. These are each always becoming the other; for Robert Owen does not exaggerate the power of circumstance. But the two complexions, or two styles of mind, — the perceptive class, and the practical finality class, — are ever in counterpoise, interacting mutually: one in hopeless minorities; the other in huge masses; one studious, contemplative, experimenting; the other, the ungrateful pupil, scornful of the source whilst availing itself of the knowledge for gain; these two nations, of genius and of animal force, though the first consist of only a dozen souls[1] and the second of twenty millions, forever by their discord and their accord yield the power of the English State.

CHAPTER XV

THE TIMES

THE power of the newspaper is familiar in America and in accordance with our political system. In England, it stands in antagonism with the feudal institutions, and it is all the more beneficent succor against the secretive tendencies of a monarchy. The celebrated Lord Somers[1] "knew of no good law proposed and passed in his time, to which the public papers had not directed his attention." There is no corner and no night. A relentless inquisition drags every secret to the day, turns the glare of this solar microscope on every malfaisance, so as to make the public a more terrible spy than any foreigner; and no weakness can be taken advantage of by an enemy, since the whole people are already forewarned. Thus England rids herself of those incrustations which have been the ruin of old states. Of course, this inspection is feared. No antique privilege, no comfortable monopoly, but sees surely that its days are counted; the people are familiarized with the reason of reform, and, one by one, take away every argument of the obstructives. "So your

grace likes the comfort of reading the newspapers," said Lord Mansfield to the Duke of Northumberland; "mark my words; you and I shall not live to see it, but this young gentleman (Lord Eldon) may, or it may be a little later; but a little sooner or later, these newspapers will most assuredly write the dukes of Northumberland out of their titles and possessions, and the country out of its king." The tendency in England towards social and political institutions like those of America, is inevitable, and the ability of its journals is the driving force.

England is full of manly, clever, well-bred men who possess the talent of writing off-hand pungent paragraphs, expressing with clearness and courage their opinion on any person or performance. Valuable or not, it is a skill that is rarely found, out of the English journals. The English do this, as they write poetry, as they ride and box, by being educated to it. Hundreds of clever Praeds and Freres and Froudes and Hoods and Hooks and Maginns and Mills and Macaulays, make poems, or short essays for a journal, as they make speeches in Parliament and on the hustings, or as they shoot and ride.[1] It is a quite accidental and arbitrary direction of their general ability. Rude health and spirits,

an Oxford education and the habits of society are implied, but not a ray of genius. It comes of the crowded state of the professions, the violent interest which all men take in politics, the facility of experimenting in the journals, and high pay.

The most conspicuous result of this talent is the Times newspaper. No power in England is more felt, more feared, or more obeyed. What you read in the morning in that journal, you shall hear in the evening in all society. It has ears everywhere, and its information is earliest, completest and surest. It has risen, year by year, and victory by victory, to its present authority. I asked one of its old contributors whether it had once been abler than it is now? "Never," he said; "these are its palmiest days." It has shown those qualities which are dear to Englishmen, unflinching adherence to its objects, prodigal intellectual ability and a towering assurance, backed by the perfect organization in its printing-house and its world-wide network of correspondence and reports. It has its own history and famous trophies. In 1820, it adopted the cause of Queen Caroline, and carried it against the king. It adopted a poor-law system, and almost alone lifted it through. When

Lord Brougham was in power, it decided against him, and pulled him down. It declared war against Ireland, and conquered it. It adopted the League against the Corn Laws, and, when Cobden had begun to despair, it announced his triumph. It denounced and discredited the French Republic of 1848, and checked every sympathy with it in England, until it had enrolled 200,000 special constables to watch the Chartists and make them ridiculous on the 10th April. It first denounced and then adopted the new French Empire, and urged the French Alliance and its results.[1] It has entered into each municipal, literary and social question, almost with a controlling voice. It has done bold and seasonable service in exposing frauds which threatened the commercial community. Meantime, it attacks its rivals by perfecting its printing machinery, and will drive them out of circulation: for the only limit to the circulation of The Times is the impossibility of printing copies fast enough; since a daily paper can only be new and seasonable for a few hours. It will kill all but that paper which is diametrically in opposition; since many papers, first and last, have lived by their attacks on the leading journal.

The late Mr. Walter was printer of The

Times, and had gradually arranged the whole *matériel* of it in perfect system. It is told that when he demanded a small share in the proprietary and was refused, he said, "As you please, gentlemen; and you may take away The Times from this office when you will; I shall publish The New Times next Monday morning." The proprietors, who had already complained that his charges for printing were excessive, found that they were in his power, and gave him whatever he wished.

I went one day with a good friend to The Times office, which was entered through a pretty garden-yard in Printing-House Square. We walked with some circumspection, as if we were entering a powder-mill; but the door was opened by a mild old woman, and, by dint of some transmission of cards, we were at last conducted into the parlor of Mr. Morris, a very gentle person, with no hostile appearances. The statistics are now quite out of date, but I remember he told us that the daily printing was then 35,000 copies; that on the 1st March, 1848, the greatest number ever printed — 54,000 — were issued; that, since February, the daily circulation had increased by 8000 copies. The old press they were then using printed five or six thousand

sheets per hour; the new machine, for which they were then building an engine, would print twelve thousand per hour. Our entertainer confided us to a courteous assistant to show us the establishment, in which, I think, they employed a hundred and twenty men. I remember I saw the reporters' room, in which they redact their hasty stenographs, but the editor's room, and who is in it, I did not see, though I shared the curiosity of mankind respecting it.

The staff of The Times has always been made up of able men. Old Walter, Sterling, Bacon, Barnes, Alsiger, Horace Twiss, Jones Lloyd, John Oxenford, Mr. Mosely, Mr. Bailey, have contributed to its renown in their special departments.[1] But it has never wanted the first pens for occasional assistance. Its private information is inexplicable, and recalls the stories of Fouché's police, whose omniscience made it believed that the Empress Josephine must be in his pay. It has mercantile and political correspondents in every foreign city, and its expresses outrun the despatches of the government. One hears anecdotes of the rise of its servants, as of the functionaries of the India House. I was told of the dexterity of one of its reporters, who, finding himself, on one occasion, where the magistrates had

strictly forbidden reporters, put his hands into his coat-pocket, and with pencil in one hand and tablet in the other, did his work.

The influence of this journal is a recognized power in Europe, and, of course, none is more conscious of it than its conductors. The tone of its articles has often been the occasion of comment from the official organs of the continental courts, and sometimes the ground of diplomatic complaint. 'What would The Times say?' is a terror in Paris, in Berlin, in Vienna, in Copenhagen and in Nepaul. Its consummate discretion and success exhibit the English skill of combination. The daily paper is the work of many hands, chiefly, it is said, of young men recently from the University, and perhaps reading law in chambers in London. Hence the academic elegance and classic allusion which adorns its columns. Hence, too, the heat and gallantry of its onset. But the steadiness of the aim suggests the belief that this fire is directed and fed by older engineers; as if persons of exact information, and with settled views of policy, supplied the writers with the basis of fact and the object to be attained, and availed themselves of their younger energy and eloquence to plead the cause. Both the council and the executive departments

gain by this division. Of two men of equal ability, the one who does not write but keeps his eye on the course of public affairs, will have the higher judicial wisdom. But the parts are kept in concert, all the articles appear to proceed from a single will. The Times never disapproves of what itself has said, or cripples itself by apology for the absence of the editor, or the indiscretion of him who held the pen. It speaks out bluff and bold, and sticks to what it says. It draws from any number of learned and skilful contributors; but a more learned and skilful person supervises, corrects, and co-ordinates. Of this closet, the secret does not transpire. No writer is suffered to claim the authorship of any paper; everything good, from whatever quarter, comes out editorially; and thus, by making the paper everything and those who write it nothing, the character and the awe of the journal gain.

The English like it for its complete information. A statement of fact in The Times is as reliable as a citation from Hansard.[1] Then they like its independence; they do not know, when they take it up, what their paper is going to say: but, above all, for the nationality and confidence of its tone. It thinks for them all; it is their understanding and day's ideal daguerreotyped.

When I see them reading its columns, they seem to me becoming every moment more British. It has the national courage, not rash and petulant, but considerate and determined. No dignity or wealth is a shield from its assault. It attacks a duke as readily as a policeman, and with the most provoking airs of condescension. It makes rude work with the Board of Admiralty. The Bench of Bishops is still less safe. One bishop fares badly for his rapacity, and another for his bigotry, and a third for his courtliness. It addresses occasionally a hint to Majesty itself, and sometimes a hint which is taken. There is an air of freedom even in their advertising columns, which speaks well for England to a foreigner. On the days when I arrived in London in 1847, I read, among the daily announcements, one offering a reward of fifty pounds to any person who would put a nobleman, described by name and title, late a member of Parliament, into any county jail in England, he having been convicted of obtaining money under false pretences.

Was never such arrogancy as the tone of this paper. Every slip of an Oxonian or Cantabrigian who writes his first leader assumes that we subdued the earth before we sat down to write this particular Times. One would think the

world was on its knees to The Times office for its daily breakfast. But this arrogance is calculated. Who would care for it, if it "surmised," or "dared to confess," or "ventured to predict," etc.? No; *it is so*, and so it shall be.

The morality and patriotism of The Times claim only to be representative, and by no means ideal. It gives the argument, not of the majority, but of the commanding class. Its editors know better than to defend Russia, or Austria, or English vested rights, on abstract grounds. But they give a voice to the class who at the moment take the lead; and they have an instinct for finding where the power now lies, which is eternally shifting its banks. Sympathizing with, and speaking for the class that rules the hour, yet being apprised of every ground-swell, every Chartist resolution, every Church squabble, every strike in the mills, they detect the first tremblings of change. They watch the hard and bitter struggles of the authors of each liberal movement, year by year; watching them only to taunt and obstruct them, — until, at last, when they see that these have established their fact, that power is on the point of passing to them, they strike in with the voice of a monarch, astonish those whom they succor as much as those

whom they desert, and make victory sure. Of course the aspirants see that The Times is one of the goods of fortune, not to be won but by winning their cause.

Punch is equally an expression of English good sense, as the London Times. It is the comic version of the same sense. Many of its caricatures are equal to the best pamphlets, and will convey to the eye in an instant the popular view which was taken of each turn of public affairs. Its sketches are usually made by masterly hands, and sometimes with genius; the delight of every class, because uniformly guided by that taste which is tyrannical in England. It is a new trait of the nineteenth century, that the wit and humor of England — as in Punch, so in the humorists, Jerrold, Dickens, Thackeray, Hood — have taken the direction of humanity and freedom.[1]

The Times, like every important institution, shows the way to a better. It is a living index of the colossal British power. Its existence honors the people who dare to print all they know, dare to know all the facts and do not wish to be flattered by hiding the extent of the public disaster.[2] There is always safety in valor. I wish I could add that this journal as-

pired to deserve the power it wields, by guidance of the public sentiment to the right. It is usually pretended, in Parliament and elsewhere, that the English press has a high tone, — which it has not. It has an imperial tone, as of a powerful and independent nation. But, as with other empires, its tone is prone to be official, and even officinal. The Times shares all the limitations of the governing classes, and wishes never to be in a minority. If only it dared to cleave to the right, to show the right to be the only expedient, and feed its batteries from the central heart of humanity, it might not have so many men of rank among its contributors, but genius would be its cordial and invincible ally ; it might now and then bear the brunt of formidable combinations, but no journal is ruined by wise courage. It would be the natural leader of British reform ; its proud function, that of being the voice of Europe, the defender of the exile and patriot against despots, would be more effectually discharged ; it would have the authority which is claimed for that dream of good men not yet come to pass, an International Congress ; and the least of its victories would be to give to England a new millennium of beneficent power.[1]

CHAPTER XVI

STONEHENGE

IT had been agreed between my friend Mr. Carlyle and me, that before I left England we should make an excursion together to Stonehenge, which neither of us had seen; and the project pleased my fancy with the double attraction of the monument and the companion. It seemed a bringing together of extreme points, to visit the oldest religious monument in Britain in company with her latest thinker, and one whose influence may be traced in every contemporary book. I was glad to sum up a little my experiences, and to exchange a few reasonable words on the aspects of England with a man on whose genius I set a very high value, and who had as much penetration and as severe a theory of duty as any person in it. On Friday, 7th July, we took the South Western Railway through Hampshire to Salisbury, where we found a carriage to convey us to Amesbury. The fine weather and my friend's local knowledge of Hampshire, in which he is wont to spend a part of every summer, made the way short. There was much to say, too, of the travelling Ameri-

cans and their usual objects in London I thought it natural that they should give some time to works of art collected here which they cannot find at home, and a little to scientific clubs and museums, which, at this moment, make London very attractive. But my philosopher was not contented. Art and 'high art' is a favorite target for his wit. "Yes, *Kunst* is a great delusion, and Goethe and Schiller wasted a great deal of good time on it:" — and he thinks he discovers that old Goethe found this out, and, in his later writings, changed his tone. As soon as men begin to talk of art, architecture and antiquities, nothing good comes of it. He wishes to go through the British Museum in silence, and thinks a sincere man will see something and say nothing. In these days, he thought, it would become an architect to consult only the grim necessity, and say, 'I can build you a coffin for such dead persons as you are, and for such dead purposes as you have, but you shall have no ornament.'[1] For the science, he had if possible even less tolerance, and compared the *savans* of Somerset House to the boy who asked Confucius "how many stars in the sky?" Confucius replied, "he minded things near him:" then said the boy, "how many

hairs are there in your eyebrows?" Confucius said, "he did n't know and did n't care."

Still speaking of the Americans, Carlyle complained that they dislike the coldness and exclusiveness of the English, and run away to France and go with their countrymen and are amused, instead of manfully staying in London, and confronting Englishmen and acquiring their culture, who really have much to teach them.

I told Carlyle that I was easily dazzled, and was accustomed to concede readily all that an Englishman would ask; I saw everywhere in the country proofs of sense and spirit, and success of every sort: I like the people; they are as good as they are handsome; they have everything and can do everything; but meantime, I surely know that as soon as I return to Massachusetts I shall lapse at once into the feeling, which the geography of America inevitably inspires, that we play the game with immense advantage; that there and not here is the seat and centre of the British race; and that no skill or activity can long compete with the prodigious natural advantages of that country, in the hands of the same race; and that England, an old and exhausted island, must one day be contented, like other parents, to be strong only in her chil-

dren. But this was a proposition which no Englishman of whatever condition can easily entertain.[1]

We left the train at Salisbury and took a carriage to Amesbury, passing by Old Sarum, a bare, treeless hill, once containing the town which sent two members to Parliament, — now, not a hut; and, arriving at Amesbury, stopped at the George Inn. After dinner we walked to Salisbury Plain. On the broad downs, under the gray sky, not a house was visible, nothing but Stonehenge, which looked like a group of brown dwarfs in the wide expanse, — Stonehenge and the barrows, which rose like green bosses about the plain, and a few hayricks. On the top of a mountain, the old temple would not be more impressive. Far and wide a few shepherds with their flocks sprinkled the plain, and a bagman drove along the road. It looked as if the wide margin given in this crowded isle to this primeval temple were accorded by the veneration of the British race to the old egg out of which all their ecclesiastical structures and history had proceeded. Stonehenge is a circular colonnade with a diameter of a hundred feet, and enclosing a second and a third colonnade within. We walked round the stones and clambered over them, to

wont ourselves with their strange aspect and groupings, and found a nook sheltered from the wind among them, where Carlyle lighted his cigar. It was pleasant to see that just this simplest of all simple structures — two upright stones and a lintel laid across — had long outstood all later churches and all history, and were like what is most permanent on the face of the planet: these, and the barrows, — mere mounds (of which there are a hundred and sixty within a circle of three miles about Stonehenge), like the same mound on the plain of Troy, which still makes good to the passing mariner on Hellespont, the vaunt of Homer and the fame of Achilles. Within the enclosure grow buttercups, nettles, and all around, wild thyme, daisy, meadowsweet, goldenrod, thistle and the carpeting grass. Over us, larks were soaring and singing; — as my friend said, "the larks which were hatched last year, and the wind which was hatched many thousand years ago." We counted and measured by paces the biggest stones, and soon knew as much as any man can suddenly know of the inscrutable temple. There are ninety-four stones, and there were once probably one hundred and sixty. The temple is circular and uncovered, and the situation fixed astronomically,

— the grand entrances, here and at Abury, being placed exactly northeast, " as all the gates of the old cavern temples are." How came the stones here? for these *sarsens*, or Druidical sandstones, are not found in this neighborhood. The *sacrificial stone*, as it is called, is the only one in all these blocks that can resist the action of fire, and as I read in the books, must have been brought one hundred and fifty miles.

On almost every stone we found the marks of the mineralogist's hammer and chisel. The nineteen smaller stones of the inner circle are of granite. I, who had just come from Professor Sedgwick's Cambridge Museum of megatheria and mastodons, was ready to maintain that some cleverer elephants or mylodonta had borne off and laid these rocks one on another. Only the good beasts must have known how to cut a well-wrought tenon and mortise, and to smooth the surface of some of the stones. The chief mystery is, that any mystery should have been allowed to settle on so remarkable a monument, in a country on which all the muses have kept their eyes now for eighteen hundred years. We are not yet too late to learn much more than is known of this structure. Some diligent Fellowes or Layard will arrive, stone by stone, at the whole history, by

that exhaustive British sense and perseverance, so whimsical in its choice of objects, which leaves its own Stonehenge or Choir Gaur [1] to the rabbits, whilst it opens pyramids and uncovers Nineveh. Stonehenge, in virtue of the simplicity of its plan and its good preservation, is as if new and recent; and, a thousand years hence, men will thank this age for the accurate history. We walked in and out and took again and again a fresh look at the uncanny stones. The old sphinx put our petty differences of nationality out of sight. To these conscious stones we two pilgrims were alike known and near. We could equally well revere their old British meaning. My philosopher was subdued and gentle. In this quiet house of destiny he happened to say, "I plant cypresses wherever I go, and if I am in search of pain, I cannot go wrong." The spot, the gray blocks and their rude order, which refuses to be disposed of, suggested to him the flight of ages and the succession of religions. The old times of England impress Carlyle much: he reads little, he says, in these last years, but *Acta Sanctorum;* the fifty-three volumes of which are in the London Library. He finds all English history therein. He can see, as he reads, the old Saint of Iona sitting there and

writing, a man to men.[1] The *Acta Sanctorum* show plainly that the men of those times believed in God and in the immortality of the soul, as their abbeys and cathedrals testify: now, even the puritanism is all gone. London is pagan. He fancied that greater men had lived in England than any of her writers; and, in fact, about the time when those writers appeared, the last of these were already gone.

We left the mound in the twilight, with the design to return the next morning, and coming back two miles to our inn we were met by little showers, and late as it was, men and women were out attempting to protect their spread windrows. The grass grows rank and dark in the showery England. At the inn, there was only milk for one cup of tea. When we called for more, the girl brought us three drops. My friend was annoyed, who stood for the credit of an English inn, and still more the next morning, by the dog-cart, sole procurable vehicle, in which we were to be sent to Wilton. I engaged the local antiquary, Mr. Brown, to go with us to Stonehenge, on our way, and show us what he knew of the "astronomical" and "sacrificial" stones. I stood on the last, and he pointed to the upright, or rather, inclined stone, called the "astro-

nomical," and bade me notice that its top ranged with the sky-line. "Yes." Very well. Now, at the summer solstice, the sun rises exactly over the top of that stone, and, at the Druidical temple at Abury, there is also an astronomical stone, in the same relative position.

In the silence of tradition, this one relation to science becomes an important clew; but we were content to leave the problem with the rocks. Was this the "Giants' Dance," which Merlin brought from Killaraus, in Ireland, to be Uther Pendragon's monument to the British nobles whom Hengist slaughtered here, as Geoffrey of Monmouth relates?[1] or was it a Roman work, as Inigo Jones explained to King James; or identical in design and style with the East Indian temples of the sun, as Davies in the Celtic Researches maintains? Of all the writers, Stukeley is the best. The heroic antiquary, charmed with the geometric perfections of his ruin, connects it with the oldest monuments and religion of the world, and with the courage of his tribe, does not stick to say, "the Deity who made the world by the scheme of Stonehenge." He finds that the *cursus*[2] on Salisbury Plain stretches across the downs like a line of latitude upon the globe, and the meridian line of Stonehenge passes

exactly through the middle of this *cursus*. But here is the high point of the theory: the Druids had the magnet; laid their courses by it; their cardinal points in Stonehenge, Ambresbury,[1] and elsewhere, which vary a little from true east and west, followed the variations of the compass. The Druids were Phœnicians. The name of the magnet is *lapis Heracleus*, and Hercules was the god of the Phœnicians. Hercules, in the legend, drew his bow at the sun, and the sun-god gave him a golden cup, with which he sailed over the ocean. What was this, but a compass-box? This cup or little boat, in which the magnet was made to float on water and so show the north, was probably its first form, before it was suspended on a pin. But science was an *arcanum*, and, as Britain was a Phœnician secret, so they kept their compass a secret, and it was lost with the Tyrian commerce. The golden fleece again, of Jason, was the compass, — a bit of loadstone, easily supposed to be the only one in the world, and therefore naturally awakening the cupidity and ambition of the young heroes of a maritime nation to join in an expedition to obtain possession of this wise stone. Hence the fable that the ship Argo was loquacious and oracular. There is also some curious coincidence

in the names. Apollodorus makes *Magnes* the son of *Æolus*, who married *Nais*. On hints like these, Stukeley builds again the grand colonnade into historic harmony, and computing backward by the known variations of the compass, bravely assigns the year 406 before Christ for the date of the temple.

For the difficulty of handling and carrying stones of this size, the like is done in all cities, every day, with no other aid than horse-power. I chanced to see, a year ago, men at work on the substructure of a house in Bowdoin Square, in Boston, swinging a block of granite of the size of the largest of the Stonehenge columns, with an ordinary derrick. The men were common masons, with paddies to help, nor did they think they were doing anything remarkable. I suppose there were as good men a thousand years ago. And we wonder how Stonehenge was built and forgotten. After spending half an hour on the spot, we set forth in our dog-cart over the downs for Wilton, Carlyle not suppressing some threats and evil omens on the proprietors, for keeping these broad plains a wretched sheep-walk when so many thousands of English men were hungry and wanted labor. But I heard afterwards that it is not an economy to cultivate

this land, which only yields one crop on being broken up, and is then spoiled.

We came to Wilton and to Wilton Hall, — the renowned seat of the Earls of Pembroke, a house known to Shakspeare and Massinger, the frequent home of Sir Philip Sidney, where he wrote the Arcadia; where he conversed with Lord Brooke, a man of deep thought, and a poet, who caused to be engraved on his tombstone, "Here lies Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, the friend of Sir Philip Sidney." It is now the property of the Earl of Pembroke, and the residence of his brother, Sidney Herbert, Esq., and is esteemed a noble specimen of the English manor-hall. My friend had a letter from Mr. Herbert to his housekeeper, and the house was shown. The state drawing-room is a double cube, 30 feet high, by 30 feet wide, by 60 feet long: the adjoining room is a single cube, of 30 feet every way. Although these apartments and the long library were full of good family portraits, Vandykes and other; and though there were some good pictures, and a quadrangle cloister full of antique and modern statuary, — to which Carlyle, catalogue in hand, did all too much justice, — yet the eye was still drawn to the windows, to a magnificent lawn, on

which grew the finest cedars in England. I had not seen more charming grounds. We went out, and walked over the estate. We crossed a bridge built by Inigo Jones, over a stream of which the gardener did not know the name (*Qu.* Alph?)[1]; watched the deer; climbed to the lonely sculptured summer-house, on a hill backed by a wood; came down into the Italian garden and into a French pavilion garnished with French busts; and so again to the house, where we found a table laid for us with bread, meats, peaches, grapes and wine.

On leaving Wilton House, we took the coach for Salisbury. The Cathedral, which was finished six hundred years ago, has even a spruce and modern air, and its spire is the highest in England. I know not why, but I had been more struck with one of no fame, at Coventry, which rises three hundred feet from the ground, with the lightness of a mullein plant, and not at all implicated with the church. Salisbury is now esteemed the culmination of the Gothic art in England, as the buttresses are fully unmasked and honestly detailed from the sides of the pile The interior of the Cathedral is obstructed by the organ in the middle, acting like a screen. I know not why in real architecture the hunger

of the eye for length of line is so rarely gratified. The rule of art is that a colonnade is more beautiful the longer it is, and that *ad infinitum*. And the nave of a church is seldom so long that it need be divided by a screen.

We loitered in the church, outside the choir, whilst service was said. Whilst we listened to the organ, my friend remarked, the music is good, and yet not quite religious, but somewhat as if a monk were panting to some fine Queen of Heaven. Carlyle was unwilling, and we did not ask to have the choir shown us, but returned to our inn, after seeing another old church of the place.[1] We passed in the train Clarendon Park, but could see little but the edge of a wood, though Carlyle had wished to pay closer attention to the birthplace of the Decrees of Clarendon. At Bishopstoke we stopped, and found Mr. H., who received us in his carriage, and took us to his house at Bishops Waltham.[2]

On Sunday we had much discourse, on a very rainy day. My friends asked, whether there were any Americans? — any with an American idea, — any theory of the right future of that country? Thus challenged, I bethought myself neither of caucuses nor congress, neither

of presidents nor of cabinet-ministers, nor of such as would make of America another Europe. I thought only of the simplest and purest minds; I said, "Certainly yes; — but those who hold it are fanatics of a dream which I should hardly care to relate to your English ears, to which it might be only ridiculous, — and yet it is the only true." So I opened the dogma of no-government and non-resistance, and anticipated the objections and the fun, and procured a kind of hearing for it. I said, it is true that I have never seen in any country a man of sufficient valor to stand for this truth, and yet it is plain to me that no less valor than this can command my respect. I can easily see the bankruptcy of the vulgar musket-worship, — though great men be musket-worshippers; — and 't is certain as God liveth, the gun that does not need another gun, the law of love and justice alone, can effect a clean revolution. I fancied that one or two of my anecdotes made some impression on Carlyle, and I insisted that the manifest absurdity of the view to English feasibility could make no difference to a gentleman; that as to our secure tenure of our mutton-chop and spinach in London or in Boston, the soul might quote Talleyrand, "*Monsieur, je n'en vois pas*

la nécessité." As I had thus taken in the conversation the saint's part, when dinner was announced, Carlyle refused to go out before me, — "he was altogether too wicked." I planted my back against the wall, and our host wittily rescued us from the dilemma, by saying he was the wickedest and would walk out first, then Carlyle followed, and I went last.[1]

On the way to Winchester, whither our host accompanied us in the afternoon, my friends asked many questions respecting American landscape, forests, houses, — my house, for example. It is not easy to answer these queries well. There, I thought, in America, lies nature sleeping, overgrowing, almost conscious, too much by half for man in the picture, and so giving a certain *tristesse*, like the rank vegetation of swamps and forests seen at night, steeped in dews and rains, which it loves; and on it man seems not able to make much impression. There, in that great sloven continent, in high Alleghany pastures, in the sea-wide sky-skirted prairie, still sleeps and murmurs and hides the great mother, long since driven away from the trim hedge-rows and over-cultivated garden of England. And, in England, I am quite too sensible of this. Every one is on his good be-

havior and must be dressed for dinner at six. So I put off my friends with very inadequate details, as best I could.

Just before entering Winchester we stopped at the Church of Saint Cross, and after looking though the quaint antiquity, we demanded a piece of bread and a draught of beer, which the founder, Henry de Blois, in 1136, commanded should be given to every one who should ask it at the gate. We had both, from the old couple who take care of the church. Some twenty people every day, they said, make the same demand. This hospitality of seven hundred years' standing did not hinder Carlyle from pronouncing a malediction on the priest who receives £2000 a year, that were meant for the poor, and spends a pittance on this small-beer and crumbs.

In the Cathedral I was gratified, at least by the ample dimensions. The length of line exceeds that of any other English church; being 556 feet, by 250 in breadth of transept. I think I prefer this church to all I have seen, except Westminster and York. Here was Canute buried, and here Alfred the Great was crowned and buried, and here the Saxon kings; and, later, in his own church, William of Wykeham.

It is very old: part of the crypt into which we went down and saw the Saxon and Norman arches of the old church on which the present stands, was built fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago. Sharon Turner, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, says, "Alfred was buried at Winchester, in the Abbey he had founded there, but his remains were removed by Henry I. to the new Abbey in the meadows at Hyde, on the northern quarter of the city, and laid under the high altar. The building was destroyed at the Reformation, and what is left of Alfred's body now lies covered by modern buildings, or buried in the ruins of the old." William of Wykeham's shrine tomb was unlocked for us, and Carlyle took hold of the recumbent statue's marble hands and patted them affectionately, for he rightly values the brave man who built Windsor and this Cathedral and the School here and New College at Oxford. But it was growing late in the afternoon. Slowly we left the old house, and parting with our host, we took the train for London.

CHAPTER XVII

PERSONAL

IN these comments on an old journey, now revised after seven busy years have much changed men and things in England, I have abstained from reference to persons, except in the last chapter and in one or two cases where the fame of the parties seemed to have given the public a property in all that concerned them. I must further allow myself a few notices, if only as an acknowledgment of debts that cannot be paid. My journeys were cheered by so much kindness from new friends, that my impression of the island is bright with agreeable memories both of public societies and of households: and, what is nowhere better found than in England, a cultivated person fitly surrounded by a happy home, with

"Honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,"[1]

is of all institutions the best. At the landing in Liverpool I found my Manchester correspondent awaiting me, a gentleman whose kind reception was followed by a train of friendly and effective attentions which never rested whilst I

remained in the country. A man of sense and of letters, the editor of a powerful local journal, he added to solid virtues an infinite sweetness and *bonhommie*. There seemed a pool of honey about his heart which lubricated all his speech and action with fine jets of mead. An equal good fortune attended many later accidents of my journey, until the sincerity of English kindness ceased to surprise. My visit fell in the fortunate days when Mr. Bancroft was the American Minister in London, and at his house, or through his good offices, I had easy access to excellent persons and to privileged places. At the house of Mr. Carlyle, I met persons eminent in society and in letters. The privileges of the Athenæum and of the Reform Clubs were hospitably opened to me, and I found much advantage in the circles of the "Geologic," the "Antiquarian" and the "Royal" Societies. Every day in London gave me new opportunities of meeting men and women who give splendor to society. I saw Rogers, Hallam, Macaulay, Milnes, Milman, Barry Cornwall, Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, Leigh Hunt, D'Israeli, Helps, Wilkinson, Bailey, Kenyon and Forster: the younger poets, Clough, Arnold and Patmore; and among the men of science, Robert Brown, Owen, Sedg-

wick, Faraday, Buckland, Lyell, De la Beche, Hooker, Carpenter, Babbage and Edward Forbes.[1] It was my privilege also to converse with Miss Baillie, with Lady Morgan, with Mrs. Jameson and Mrs. Somerville.[2] A finer hospitality made many private houses not less known and dear. It is not in distinguished circles that wisdom and elevated characters are usually found, or, if found, they are not confined thereto; and my recollections of the best hours go back to private conversations in different parts of the kingdom, with persons little known. Nor am I insensible to the courtesy which frankly opened to me some noble mansions, if I do not adorn my page with their names. Among the privileges of London, I recall with pleasure two or three signal days, one at Kew, where Sir William Hooker showed me all the riches of the vast botanic garden; one at the Museum, where Sir Charles Fellowes explained in detail the history of his Ionic trophy-monument; and still another, on which Mr. Owen accompanied my countryman Mr. H. and myself through the Hunterian Museum.

The like frank hospitality, bent on real service, I found among the great and the humble, wherever I went; in Birmingham, in Oxford, in

Leicester, in Nottingham, in Sheffield, in Manchester, in Liverpool. At Edinburgh, through the kindness of Dr. Samuel Brown, I made the acquaintance of De Quincey, of Lord Jeffrey, of Wilson, of Mrs. Crowe, of the Messrs. Chambers, and of a man of high character and genius, the short-lived painter, David Scott.

At Ambleside in March, 1848, I was for a couple of days the guest of Miss Martineau, then newly returned from her Egyptian tour. On Sunday afternoon I accompanied her to Rydal Mount. And as I have recorded a visit to Wordsworth, many years before, I must not forget this second interview. We found Mr. Wordsworth asleep on the sofa. He was at first silent and indisposed, as an old man suddenly waked before he had ended his nap; but soon became full of talk on the French news. He was nationally bitter on the French; bitter on Scotchmen, too. No Scotchman, he said, can write English. He detailed the two models, on one or the other of which all the sentences of the historian Robertson are framed. Nor could Jeffrey, nor the Edinburgh Reviewers write English, nor can * * *, who is a pest to the English tongue.[1] Incidentally he added, Gibbon cannot write English. The Edinburgh

Review wrote what would tell and what would sell. It had however changed the tone of its literary criticism from the time when a certain letter was written to the editor by Coleridge. Mrs. W. had the Editor's answer in her possession. Tennyson he thinks a right poetic genius, though with some affectation. He had thought an elder brother of Tennyson at first the better poet, but must now reckon Alfred the true one. . . . In speaking of I know not what style, he said, "to be sure, it was the manner, but then you know the matter always comes out of the manner." . . . He thought Rio Janeiro the best place in the world for a great capital city. . . . We talked of English national character. I told him it was not creditable that no one in all the country knew anything of Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, whilst in every American library his translations are found. I said, If Plato's Republic were published in England as a new book to-day, do you think it would find any readers? — he confessed it would not: "And yet," he added after a pause, with that complacency which never deserts a true-born Englishman, "and yet we have embodied it all."[1]

His opinions of French, English, Irish and

Scotch, seemed rashly formulized from little anecdotes of what had befallen himself and members of his family, in a diligence or stage-coach. His face sometimes lighted up, but his conversation was not marked by special force or elevation. Yet perhaps it is a high compliment to the cultivation of the English generally, when we find such a man not distinguished. He had a healthy look, with a weather-beaten face, his face corrugated, especially the large nose.

Miss Martineau, who lived near him, praised him to me not for his poetry, but for thrift and economy; for having afforded to his country-neighbors an example of a modest household where comfort and culture were secured without any display. She said that in his early housekeeping at the cottage where he first lived, he was accustomed to offer his friends bread and plainest fare; if they wanted anything more, they must pay him for their board. It was the rule of the house. I replied that it evinced English pluck more than any anecdote I knew. A gentleman in the neighborhood told the story of Walter Scott's staying once for a week with Wordsworth, and slipping out every day, under pretence of a walk, to the Swan Inn for a cold cut and porter; and one day passing with Words-

worth the inn, he was betrayed by the landlord's asking him if he had come for his porter. Of course this trait would have another look in London, and there you will hear from different literary men that Wordsworth had no personal friend, that he was not amiable, that he was parsimonious, etc. Landor, always generous, says that he never praised anybody. A gentleman in London showed me a watch that once belonged to Milton, whose initials are engraved on its face. He said he once showed this to Wordsworth, who took it in one hand, then drew out his own watch and held it up with the other, before the company, but no one making the expected remark, he put back his own in silence. I do not attach much importance to the disparagement of Wordsworth among London scholars. Who reads him well will know that in following the strong bent of his genius, he was careless of the many, careless also of the few, self-assured that he should "create the taste by which he is to be enjoyed." He lived long enough to witness the revolution he had wrought, and to "see what he foresaw."[1] There are torpid places in his mind, there is something hard and sterile in his poetry, want of grace and variety, want of due catholicity and cosmopolitan scope :

he had conformities to English politics and traditions; he had egotistic puerilities in the choice and treatment of his subjects; but let us say of him that, alone in his time, he treated the human mind well, and with an absolute trust. His adherence to his poetic creed rested on real inspirations. The Ode on Immortality is the high-water mark which the intellect has reached in this age. New means were employed, and new realms added to the empire of the muse, by his courage.[1]

CHAPTER XVIII

RESULT

ENGLAND is the best of actual nations. It is no ideal framework, it is an old pile built in different ages, with repairs, additions and makeshifts; but you see the poor best you have got. London is the epitome of our times, and the Rome of to-day. Broad-fronted, broad-bottomed Teutons, they stand in solid phalanx foursquare to the points of compass; they constitute the modern world, they have earned their vantage ground and held it through ages of adverse possession. They are well marked and differing from other leading races. England is tender-hearted. Rome was not. England is not so public in its bias; private life is its place of honor. Truth in private life, untruth in public, marks these home-loving men. Their political conduct is not decided by general views, but by internal intrigues and personal and family interest. They cannot readily see beyond England. The history of Rome and Greece, when written by their scholars, degenerates into English party pamphlets. They cannot see beyond England, nor in England can they transcend

the interests of the governing classes. "English principles" mean a primary regard to the interests of property.[1] England, Scotland and Ireland combine to check the colonies. England and Scotland combine to check Irish manufactures and trade. England rallies at home to check Scotland. In England, the strong classes check the weaker. In the home population of near thirty millions, there are but one million voters. The Church punishes dissent, punishes education. Down to a late day, marriages performed by dissenters were illegal. A bitter class-legislation gives power to those who are rich enough to buy a law. The game-laws are a proverb of oppression. Pauperism incrusts and clogs the state, and in hard times becomes hideous. In bad seasons, the porridge was diluted. Multitudes lived miserably by shell-fish and sea-ware. In cities, the children are trained to beg, until they shall be old enough to rob. Men and women were convicted of poisoning scores of children for burial-fees. In Irish districts, men deteriorated in size and shape, the nose sunk, the gums were exposed, with diminished brain and brutal form. During the Australian emigration, multitudes were rejected by the commissioners as being too emaciated for

useful colonists. During the Russian war, few of those that offered as recruits were found up to the medical standard, though it had been reduced.

The foreign policy of England, though ambitious and lavish of money, has not often been generous or just. It has a principal regard to the interest of trade, checked however by the aristocratic bias of the ambassador, which usually puts him in sympathy with the continental Courts. It sanctioned the partition of Poland, it betrayed Genoa, Sicily, Parma, Greece, Turkey, Rome and Hungary.[1]

Some public regards they have. They have abolished slavery in the West Indies and put an end to human sacrifices in the East. At home they have a certain statute hospitality. England keeps open doors, as a trading country must, to all nations. It is one of their fixed ideas, and wrathfully supported by their laws in unbroken sequence for a thousand years. In *Magna Charta* it was ordained that all "merchants shall have safe and secure conduct to go out and come into England, and to stay there, and to pass as well by land as by water, to buy and sell by the ancient allowed customs, without any evil toll, except in time of war, or when they shall be of

any nation at war with us." It is a statute and obliged hospitality and peremptorily maintained. But this shop-rule had one magnificent effect. It extends its cold unalterable courtesy to political exiles of every opinion, and is a fact which might give additional light to that portion of the planet seen from the farthest star. But this perfunctory hospitality puts no sweetness into their unaccommodating manners, no check on that puissant nationality which makes their existence incompatible with all that is not English.

What we must say about a nation is a superficial dealing with symptoms. We cannot go deep enough into the biography of the spirit who never throws himself entire into one hero, but delegates his energy in parts or spasms to vicious and defective individuals. But the wealth of the source is seen in the plenitude of English nature. What variety of power and talent; what facility and plenteousness of knighthood, lordship, ladyship, royalty, loyalty; what a proud chivalry is indicated in "Collins's Peerage," through eight hundred years! What dignity resting on what reality and stoutness! What courage in war, what sinew in labor, what cunning workmen, what inventors and engineers, what seamen and pilots, what clerks and scholars! No one man

and no few men can represent them. It is a people of myriad personalities. Their many-headedness is owing to the advantageous position of the middle class, who are always the source of letters and science. Hence the vast plenty of their æsthetic production. As they are many-headed, so they are many-nationed: their colonization annexes archipelagoes and continents, and their speech seems destined to be the universal language of men. I have noted the reserve of power in the English temperament. In the island, they never let out all the length of all the reins, there is no Berserker rage, no abandonment or ecstasy of will or intellect, like that of the Arabs in the time of Mahomet, or like that which intoxicated France in 1789. But who would see the uncoiling of that tremendous spring, the explosion of their well-husbanded forces, must follow the swarms which pouring now for two hundred years from the British islands, have sailed and rode and traded and planted through all climates, mainly following the belt of empire, the temperate zones, carrying the Saxon seed, with its instinct for liberty and law, for arts and for thought, — acquiring under some skies a more electric energy than the native air allows, — to the conquest of the

globe. Their colonial policy, obeying the necessities of a vast empire, has become liberal. Canada and Australia have been contented with substantial independence. They are expiating the wrongs of India by benefits; first, in works for the irrigation of the peninsula, and roads, and telegraphs; and secondly, in the instruction of the people, to qualify them for self-government, when the British power shall be finally called home.

Their mind is in a state of arrested development,[1] — a divine cripple like Vulcan; a blind *savant* like Huber[2] and Sanderson. They do not occupy themselves on matters of general and lasting import, but on a corporeal civilization, on goods that perish in the using. But they read with good intent, and what they learn they incarnate. The English mind turns every abstraction it can receive into a portable utensil, or a working institution. Such is their tenacity and such their practical turn, that they hold all they gain. Hence we say that only the English race can be trusted with freedom, — freedom which is double-edged and dangerous to any but the wise and robust. The English designate the kingdoms emulous of free institutions, as the sentimental nations. Their culture is not an

outside varnish, but is thorough and secular in families and the race. They are oppressive with their temperament, and all the more that they are refined. I have sometimes seen them walk with my countrymen when I was forced to allow them every advantage, and their companions seemed bags of bones.

There is cramp limitation in their habit of thought, sleepy routine, and a tortoise's instinct to hold hard to the ground with his claws, lest he should be thrown on his back. There is a drag of inertia which resists reform in every shape;—law-reform, army-reform, extension of suffrage, Jewish franchise, Catholic emancipation,—the abolition of slavery, of impressment, penal code and entails. They praise this drag, under the formula that it is the excellence of the British constitution that no law can anticipate the public opinion. These poor tortoises must hold hard, for they feel no wings sprouting at their shoulders. Yet somewhat divine warms at their heart and waits a happier hour. It hides in their sturdy will. "Will," said the old philosophy, "is the measure of power," and personality is the token of this race. *Quid vult valde vult.* What they do they do with a will. You cannot account for their success by their

Christianity, commerce, charter, common law, Parliament, or letters, but by the contumacious sharp-tongued energy of English *naturel*, with a poise impossible to disturb, which makes all these its instruments. They are slow and reticent, and are like a dull good horse which lets every nag pass him, but with whip and spur will run down every racer in the field. They are right in their feeling, though wrong in their speculation.

The feudal system survives in the steep inequality of property and privilege, in the limited franchise, in the social barriers which confine patronage and promotion to a caste, and still more in the submissive ideas pervading these people. The fagging of the schools is repeated in the social classes. An Englishman shows no mercy to those below him in the social scale, as he looks for none from those above him; any forbearance from his superiors surprises him, and they suffer in his good opinion. But the feudal system can be seen with less pain on large historical grounds. It was pleaded in mitigation of the rotten borough, that it worked well, that substantial justice was done. Fox, Burke, Pitt, Erskine, Wilberforce, Sheridan, Romilly, or whatever national man, were by

this means sent to Parliament, when their return by large constituencies would have been doubtful. So now we say that the right measures of England are the men it bred; that it has yielded more able men in five hundred years than any other nation; and, though we must not play Providence and balance the chances of producing ten great men against the comfort of ten thousand mean men, yet retrospectively, we may strike the balance and prefer one Alfred, one Shakspeare, one Milton, one Sidney, one Raleigh, one Wellington, to a million foolish democrats.

The American system is more democratic, more humane; yet the American people do not yield better or more able men, or more inventions or books or benefits than the English. Congress is not wiser or better than Parliament. France has abolished its suffocating old *régime*, but is not recently marked by any more wisdom or virtue.

The power of performance has not been exceeded, — the creation of value. The English have given importance to individuals, a principal end and fruit of every society. Every man is allowed and encouraged to be what he is, and is guarded in the indulgence of his whim.

" Magna Charta," said Rushworth, " is such a fellow that he will have no sovereign." By this general activity and by this sacredness of individuals, they have in seven hundred years evolved the principles of freedom. It is the land of patriots, martyrs, sages and bards, and if the ocean out of which it emerged should wash it away, it will be remembered as an island famous for immortal laws, for the announcements of original right which make the stone tables of liberty.

CHAPTER XIX

SPEECH AT MANCHESTER

A FEW days after my arrival at Manchester, in November, 1847, the Manchester Athenæum gave its annual Banquet in the Free-Trade Hall. With other guests, I was invited to be present and to address the company. In looking over recently a newspaper-report of my remarks, I incline to reprint it, as fitly expressing the feeling with which I entered England, and which agrees well enough with the more deliberate results of better acquaintance recorded in the foregoing pages. Sir Archibald Alison, the historian, presided, and opened the meeting with a speech. He was followed by Mr. Cobden, Lord Brackley and others, among whom was Mr. Cruikshank, one of the contributors to Punch.[1] Mr. Dickens's letter of apology for his absence was read. Mr. Jerrold, who had been announced, did not appear. On being introduced to the meeting I said: —

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen: It is pleasant to me to meet this great and brilliant company, and doubly pleasant to see the faces of so many distinguished persons on this platform.

But I have known all these persons already. When I was at home, they were as near to me as they are to you. The arguments of the League and its leader are known to all the friends of free trade. The gayeties and genius, the political, the social, the parietal wit of Punch go duly every fortnight to every boy and girl in Boston and New York. Sir, when I came to sea, I found the History of Europe, by Sir A. Alison, on the ship's cabin table, the property of the captain; — a sort of programme or play-bill to tell the seafaring New Englander what he shall find on his landing here. And as for Dombey, sir, there is no land where paper exists to print on, where it is not found; no man who can read, that does not read it, and, if he cannot, he finds some charitable pair of eyes that can, and hears it.

But these things are not for me to say; these compliments, though true, would better come from one who felt and understood these merits more. I am not here to exchange civilities with you, but rather to speak of that which I am sure interests these gentlemen more than their own praises; of that which is good in holidays and working-days, the same in one century and in another century. That which lures a solitary

American in the woods with the wish to see England, is the moral peculiarity of the Saxon race, — its commanding sense of right and wrong, the love and devotion to that, — this is the imperial trait, which arms them with the sceptre of the globe.[1] It is this which lies at the foundation of that aristocratic character, which certainly wanders into strange ragaries, so that its origin is often lost sight of, but which, if it should lose this, would find itself paralyzed; and in trade and in the mechanic's shop, gives that honesty in performance, that thoroughness and solidity of work which is a national characteristic. This conscience is one element, and the other is that loyal adhesion, that habit of friendship, that homage of man to man, running through all classes, — the electing of worthy persons to a certain fraternity, to acts of kindness and warm and stanch support, from year to year, from youth to age, — which is alike lovely and honorable to those who render and those who receive it; which stands in strong contrast with the superficial attachments of other races, their excessive courtesy and short-lived connection.

You will think me very pedantic, gentlemen, but holiday though it be, I have not the smallest interest in any holiday except as it celebrates

real and not pretended joys;' and I think it just, in this time of gloom and commercial disaster, of affliction and beggary in these districts, that, on these very accounts I speak of, you should not fail to keep your literary anniversary. I seem to hear you say, that for all that is come and gone yet, we will not reduce by one chaplet or one oak-leaf the braveries of our annual feast. For I must tell you, I was given to understand in my childhood that the British island from which my forefathers came was no lotus-garden, no paradise of serene sky and roses and music and merriment all the year round, no, but a cold, foggy, mournful country, where nothing grew well in the open air but robust men and virtuous women, and these of a wonderful fibre and endurance; that their best parts were slowly revealed; their virtues did not come out until they quarrelled; they did not strike twelve the first time; good lovers, good haters, and you could know little about them till you had seen them long, and little good of them till you had seen them in action; that in prosperity they were moody and dumpish, but in adversity they were grand. Is it not true, sir, that the wise ancients did not praise the ship parting with flying colors from the port, but only that

brave sailor which came back with torn sheets and battered sides, stript of her banners, but having ridden out the storm? And so, gentlemen, I feel in regard to this aged England, with the possessions, honors and trophies, and also with the infirmities of a thousand years gathering around her, irretrievably committed as she now is to many old customs which cannot be suddenly changed; pressed upon by the transitions of trade and new and all incalculable modes, fabrics, arts, machines and competing populations. I see her not dispirited, not weak, but well remembering that she has seen dark days before; — indeed with a kind of instinct that she sees a little better in a cloudy day, and that in storm of battle and calamity she has a secret vigor and a pulse like a cannon. I see her in her old age, not decrepit, but young and still daring to believe in her power of endurance and expansion. Seeing this, I say, All hail! mother of nations, mother of heroes, with strength still equal to the time; still wise to entertain and swift to execute the policy which the mind and heart of mankind requires in the present hour, and thus only hospitable to the foreigner and truly a home to the thoughtful and generous who are born in the soil. So be

it! so let it be! If it be not so, if the courage of England goes with the chances of a commercial crisis, I will go back to the capes of Massachusetts and my own Indian stream, and say to my countrymen, the old race are all gone, and the elasticity and hope of mankind must henceforth remain on the Alleghany ranges, or nowhere.'

LECTURES AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

NOTE

OF the pieces included in this volume the following, namely, those from the Dial, "Character," "Plutarch" and the biographical sketches of Dr. Ripley, of Mr. Hoar and of Henry Thoreau, were printed by Mr. Emerson before I took any part in the arrangement of his papers. The rest, except the sketches of Miss Mary Emerson and of Major Stearns, I got ready for his use in readings to his friends or to a limited public. He had given up the regular practice of lecturing, but would sometimes, upon special request, read a paper that had been prepared for him from his manuscripts, in the manner described in the Preface to Letters and Social Aims, — some former lecture serving as a nucleus for the new. Some of these papers he afterwards allowed to be printed; others, namely, "Aristocracy," "Education," "The Man of Letters," "The Scholar," "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England," "Mary Moody Emerson," "George L. Stearns," are now published for the first time.

J. E. CABOT.

1883.

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II

DEMONOLOGY

Night-dreams trace on Memory's wall
  Shadows of the thoughts of day,
And thy fortunes as they fall
  The bias of thy will betray.

In the chamber, on the stairs,
Lurking dumb,
Go and come
Lemurs and Lars.

DEMONOLOGY

THE name Demonology covers dreams, omens, coincidences, luck, sortilege, magic and other experiences which shun rather than court inquiry, and deserve notice chiefly because every man has usually in a lifetime two or three hints in this kind which are specially impressive to him. They also shed light on our structure.

The witchcraft of sleep divides with truth the empire of our lives. This soft enchantress visits two children lying locked in each other's arms, and carries them asunder by wide spaces of land and sea, and wide intervals of time: —

> "There lies a sleeping city, God of dreams!
> What an unreal and fantastic world
> Is going on below!
> Within the sweep of yon encircling wall
> How many a large creation of the night,
> Wide wilderness and mountain, rock and sea,
> Peopled with busy, transitory groups,
> Finds room to rise, and never feels the crowd." [1]

'T is superfluous to think of the dreams of multitudes, the astonishment remains that one should dream; that we should resign so quietly this deifying Reason, and become the theatre of

delirious shows, wherein time, space, persons, cities, animals, should dance before us in merry and mad confusion; a delicate creation outdoing the prime and flower of actual Nature, antic comedy alternating with horrid pictures. Sometimes the forgotten companions of childhood reappear: —

> "They come, in dim procession led,
> The cold, the faithless, and the dead,
> As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
> As if they parted yesterday:" [1]

or we seem busied for hours and days in peregrinations over seas and lands, in earnest dialogues, strenuous actions for nothings and absurdities, cheated by spectral jokes and waking suddenly with ghastly laughter, to be rebuked by the cold, lonely, silent midnight, and to rake with confusion in memory among the gibbering nonsense to find the motive of this contemptible cachinnation. Dreams are jealous of being remembered; they dissipate instantly and angrily if you try to hold them. When newly awaked from lively dreams, we are so near them, still agitated by them, still in their sphere, — give us one syllable, one feature, one hint, and we should repossess the whole; hours of this strange entertainment would come trooping back

to us; but we cannot get our hand on the first link or fibre, and the whole is lost. There is a strange wilfulness in the speed with which it disperses and baffles our grasp.'

A dislocation seems to be the foremost trait of dreams. A painful imperfection almost always attends them. The fairest forms, the most noble and excellent persons, are deformed by some pitiful and insane circumstance. The very landscape and scenery in a dream seem not to fit us, but like a coat or cloak of some other person to overlap and encumber the wearer; so is the ground, the road, the house, in dreams, too long or too short, and if it served no other purpose would show us how accurately Nature fits man awake.

There is one memory of waking and another of sleep. In our dreams the same scenes and fancies are many times associated, and that too, it would seem, for years. In sleep one shall travel certain roads in stage-coaches or gigs, which he recognizes as familiar, and has dreamed that ride a dozen times; or shall walk alone in familiar fields and meadows, which road or which meadow in waking hours he never looked upon. This feature of dreams deserves the more attention from its singular resemblance to that obscure yet

startling experience which almost every person confesses in daylight, that particular passages of conversation and action have occurred to him in the same order before, whether dreaming or waking; a suspicion that they have been with precisely these persons in precisely this room, and heard precisely this dialogue, at some former hour, they know not when.

Animals have been called "the dreams of Nature." Perhaps for a conception of their consciousness we may go to our own dreams. In a dream we have the instinctive obedience, the same torpidity of the highest power, the same unsurprised assent to the monstrous as these metamorphosed men exhibit. Our thoughts in a stable or in a menagerie, on the other hand, may well remind us of our dreams. What compassion do these imprisoning forms awaken! You may catch the glance of a dog sometimes which lays a kind of claim to sympathy and brotherhood. What! somewhat of me down there? Does he know it? Can he too, as I, go out of himself, see himself, perceive relations? We fear lest the poor brute should gain one dreadful glimpse of his condition, should learn in some moment the tough limitations of this fettering organization.[x] It was in this glance that Ovid got the hint of

his metamorphoses; Calidasa of his transmigration of souls. For these fables are our own thoughts carried out.[1] What keeps those wild tales in circulation for thousands of years? What but the wild fact to which they suggest some approximation of theory? Nor is the fact quite solitary, for in varieties of our own species where organization seems to predominate over the genius of man, in Kalmuck or Malay or Flathead Indian, we are sometimes pained by the same feeling; and sometimes too the sharpwitted prosperous white man awakens it. In a mixed assembly we have chanced to see not only a glance of Abdiel, so grand and keen, but also in other faces the features of the mink, of the bull, of the rat and the barn-door fowl. You think, could the man overlook his own condition, he could not be restrained from suicide.

Dreams have a poetic integrity and truth. This limbo and dust-hole of thought is presided over by a certain reason, too. Their extravagance from nature is yet within a higher nature. They seem to us to suggest an abundance and fluency of thought not familiar to the waking experience. They pique us by independence of us, yet we know ourselves in this mad crowd, and owe to dreams a kind of divination and wisdom. My

dreams are not me; they are not Nature, or the Not-me: they are both. They have a double consciousness, at once sub- and ob-jective. We call the phantoms that rise, the creation of our fancy, but they act like mutineers, and fire on their commander; showing that every act, every thought, every cause, is bipolar, and in the act is contained the counteraction. If I strike, I am struck; if I chase, I am pursued.[1]

Wise and sometimes terrible hints shall in them be thrown to the man out of a quite unknown intelligence. He shall be startled two or three times in his life by the justice as well as the significance of this phantasmagoria. Once or twice the conscious fetters shall seem to be unlocked, and a freer utterance attained. A prophetic character in all ages has haunted them. They are the maturation often of opinions not consciously carried out to statements, but whereof we already possessed the elements. Thus, when awake, I know the character of Rupert, but do not think what he may do. In dreams I see him engaged in certain actions which seem preposterous, — out of all fitness. He is hostile, he is cruel, he is frightful, he is a poltroon. It turns out prophecy a year later. But it was already in my mind as character, and the sibyl dreams merely embodied

it in fact. Why then should not symptoms, auguries, forebodings be, and, as one said, the moanings of the spirit?

We are let by this experience into the high region of Cause, and acquainted with the identity of very unlike-seeming effects. We learn that actions whose turpitude is very differently reputed proceed from one and the same affection. Sleep takes off the costume of circumstance, arms us with terrible freedom, so that every will rushes to a deed. A skilful man reads his dreams for his self-knowledge; yet not the details, but the quality. What part does he play in them, — a cheerful, manly part, or a poor drivelling part? However monstrous and grotesque their apparitions, they have a substantial truth. The same remark may be extended to the omens and coincidences which may have astonished us. Of all it is true that the reason of them is always latent in the individual. Goethe said: "These whimsical pictures, inasmuch as they originate from us, may well have an analogy with our whole life and fate."

The soul contains in itself the event that shall presently befall it, for the event is only the actualizing of its thoughts. It is no wonder that particular dreams and presentiments should fall

out and be prophetic. The fallacy consists in selecting a few insignificant hints when all are inspired with the same sense. As if one should exhaust his astonishment at the economy of his thumb-nail, and overlook the central causal miracle of his being a man. Every man goes through the world attended with innumerable facts prefiguring (yes, distinctly announcing) his fate, if only eyes of sufficient heed and illumination were fastened on the sign.[1] The sign is always there, if only the eye were also; just as under every tree in the speckled sunshine and shade no man notices that every spot of light is a perfect image of the sun, until in some hour the moon eclipses the luminary; and then first we notice that the spots of light have become crescents, or annular, and correspond to the changed figure of the sun. Things are significant enough, Heaven knows; but the seer of the sign,—where is he? We doubt not a man's fortune may be read in the lines of his hand, by palmistry; in the lines of his face, by physiognomy; in the outlines of the skull, by craniology: the lines are all there, but the reader waits.[2] The long waves indicate to the instructed mariner that there is no near land in the direction from which they come. Belzoni describes the three

marks which led him to dig for a door to the pyramid of Ghizeh. What thousands had beheld the same spot for so many ages, and seen no three marks.

Secret analogies tie together the remotest parts of Nature, as the atmosphere of a summer morning is filled with innumerable gossamer threads running in every direction, revealed by the beams of the rising sun![1] All life, all creation, is telltale and betraying. A man reveals himself in every glance and step and movement and rest:—

> "Head with foot hath private amity,
> And both with moons and tides."[2]

Not a mathematical axiom but is a moral rule. The jest and byword to an intelligent ear extends its meaning to the soul and to all time. Indeed, all productions of man are so anthropomorphous that not possibly can he invent any fable that shall not have a deep moral and be true in senses and to an extent never intended by the inventor. Thus all the bravest tales of Homer and the poets, modern philosophers can explain with profound judgment of law and state and ethics. Lucian has an idle tale that Pancrates, journeying from Memphis to Coppus, and wanting a servant, took a door-bar and pronounced over it magical words, and it stood up and brought

him water, and turned a spit, and carried bundles, doing all the work of a slave. What is this but a prophecy of the progress of art? For Pancrates write Watt or Fulton, and for "magical words" write "steam;" and do they not make an iron bar and half a dozen wheels do the work, not of one, but of a thousand skilful mechanics?

"Nature," said Swedenborg, "makes almost as much demand on our faith as miracles do." And I find nothing in fables more astonishing than my experience in every hour. One moment of a man's life is a fact so stupendous as to take the lustre out of all fiction.[1] The lovers of marvels, of what we call the occult and unproved sciences, of mesmerism, of astrology, of coincidences, of intercourse, by writing or by rapping or by painting, with departed spirits, need not reproach us with incredulity because we are slow to accept their statement. It is not the incredibility of the fact, but a certain want of harmony between the action and the agents. We are used to vaster wonders than these that are alleged. In the hands of poets, of devout and simple minds, nothing in the line of their character and genius would surprise us. But we should look for the style of the great artist in it, look for completeness and harmony. Nature never works

like a conjuror, to surprise, rarely by shocks, but by infinite graduation;[1] so that we live embosomed in sounds we do not hear, scents we do not smell, spectacles we see not, and by innumerable impressions so softly laid on that though important we do not discover them until our attention is called to them.

For Spiritism, it shows that no man, almost, is fit to give evidence. Then I say to the amiable and sincere among them, these matters are quite too important than that I can rest them on any legends. If I have no facts, as you allege, I can very well wait for them. I am content and occupied with such miracles as I know, such as my eyes and ears daily show me, such as humanity and astronomy. If any others are important to me they will certainly be shown to me.[2]

In times most credulous of these fancies the sense was always met and the superstition rebuked by the grave spirit of reason and humanity. When Hector is told that the omens are unpropitious, he replies, —

"One omen is the best, to fight for one's country."[3]

Euripides said, "He is not the best prophet who guesses well, and he is not the wisest man

whose guess turns out well in the event, but he who, whatever the event be, takes reason and probability for his guide." "Swans, horses, dogs and dragons," says Plutarch, "we distinguish as sacred, and vehicles of the divine foresight, and yet we cannot believe that men are sacred and favorites of Heaven." The poor ship-master discovered a sound theology, when in the storm at sea he made his prayer to Neptune, "O God, thou mayst save me if thou wilt, and if thou wilt thou mayst destroy me; but, however, I will hold my rudder true." [1] Let me add one more example of the same good sense, in a story quoted out of Hecateus of Abdera: —

"As I was once travelling by the Red Sea, there was one among the horsemen that attended us named Masollam, a brave and strong man, and according to the testimony of all the Greeks and barbarians, a very skilful archer. Now while the whole multitude was on the way, an augur called out to them to stand still, and this man inquired the reason of their halting. The augur showed him a bird, and told him, 'If that bird remained where he was, it would be better for them all to remain; if he flew on, they might proceed; but if he flew back, they must return.' The Jew said nothing, but bent his bow and shot the bird to the ground. This act offended the augur and some others, and they

began to utter imprecations against the Jew. But he replied, 'Wherefore? Why are you so foolish as to take care of this unfortunate bird? How could this fowl give us any wise directions respecting our journey, when he could not save his own life? Had he known anything of futurity, he would not have come here to be killed by the arrow of Masollam the Jew.'" [1]

It is not the tendency of our times to ascribe importance to whimsical pictures of sleep, or to omens. But the faith in peculiar and alien power takes another form in the modern mind, much more resembling the ancient doctrine of the guardian genius. The belief that particular individuals are attended by a good fortune which makes them desirable associates in any enterprise of uncertain success, exists not only among those who take part in political and military projects, but influences all joint action of commerce and affairs, and a corresponding assurance in the individuals so distinguished meets and justifies the expectation of others by a boundless self-trust. "I have a lucky hand, sir," said Napoleon to his hesitating Chancellor; "those on whom I lay it are fit for anything." This faith is familiar in one form, — that often a certain abdication of prudence and foresight is an element of success; that children and young persons come off safe

from casualties that would have proved dangerous to wiser people. We do not think the young will be forsaken; but he is fast approaching the age when the sub-miraculous external protection and leading are withdrawn and he is committed to his own care. The young man takes a leap in the dark and alights safe. As he comes into manhood he remembers passages and persons that seem, as he looks at them now, to have been supernaturally deprived of injurious influence on him. His eyes were holden that he could not see. But he learns that such risks he may no longer run. He observes, with pain, not that he incurs mishaps here and there, but that his genius, whose invisible benevolence was tower and shield to him, is no longer present and active.

In the popular belief, ghosts are a selecting tribe, avoiding millions, speaking to one. In our traditions, fairies, angels and saints show the like favoritism; so do the agents and the means of magic, as sorcerers and amulets. This faith in a doting power, so easily sliding into the current belief everywhere, and, in the particular of lucky days and fortunate persons, as frequent in America to-day as the faith in incantations and philters was in old Rome, or the wholesome potency of the sign of the cross in modern Rome, — this

supposed power runs athwart the recognized agencies, natural and moral, which science and religion explore. Heeded though it be in many actions and partnerships, it is not the power to which we build churches, or make liturgies and prayers, or which we regard in passing laws, or found college professorships to expound. Goethe has said in his Autobiography what is much to the purpose: —

"I believed that I discovered in nature, animate and inanimate, intelligent and brute, somewhat which manifested itself only in contradiction, and therefore could not be grasped by a conception, much less by a word. It was not god-like, since it seemed unreasonable; not human, since it had no understanding; not devilish, since it was beneficent; not angelic, since it is often a marplot. It resembled chance, since it showed no sequel. It resembled Providence, since it pointed at connection. All which limits us seemed permeable to that. It seemed to deal at pleasure with the necessary elements of our constitution; it shortened time and extended space. Only in the impossible it seemed to delight, and the possible to repel with contempt. This, which seemed to insert itself between all other things, to sever them, to bind them, I named the Demoniacal, after the example of the ancients, and of those who had observed the like.

"Although every demoniacal property can manifest

itself in the corporeal and incorporeal, yes, in beasts too in a remarkable manner, yet it stands specially in wonderful relations with men, and forms in the moral world, though not an antagonist, yet a transverse element, so that the former may be called the warp, the latter the woof. For the phenomena which hence originate there are countless names, since all philosophies and religions have attempted in prose or in poetry to solve this riddle, and to settle the thing once for all, as indeed they may be allowed to do.

"But this demonic element appears most fruitful when it shows itself as the determining characteristic in an individual. In the course of my life I have been able to observe several such, some near, some farther off. They are not always superior persons, either in mind or in talent. They seldom recommend themselves through goodness of heart. But a monstrous force goes out from them, and they exert an incredible power over all creatures, and even over the elements; who shall say how far such an influence may extend? All united moral powers avail nothing against them. In vain do the clear-headed part of mankind discredit them as deceivers or deceived, — the mass is attracted. Seldom or never do they meet their match among their contemporaries; they are not to be conquered save by the universe itself, against which they have taken up arms. Out of such experiences doubtless arose the strange, monstrous proverb, 'Nobody against God but God.'" [1]

It would be easy in the political history of

every time to furnish examples of this irregular success, men having a force which without virtue, without shining talent, yet makes them prevailing. No equal appears in the field against them.[1] A power goes out from them which draws all men and events to favor them. The crimes they commit, the exposures which follow, and which would ruin any other man, are strangely overlooked, or do more strangely turn to their account.

I set down these things as I find them, but however poetic these twilights of thought, I like daylight, and I find somewhat wilful, some play at blindman's-buff, when men as wise as Goethe talk mysteriously of the demonological. The insinuation is that the known eternal laws of morals and matter are sometimes corrupted or evaded by this gypsy principle, which chooses favorites and works in the dark for their behoof; as if the laws of the Father of the universe were sometimes balked and eluded by a meddlesome Aunt of the universe for her pets. You will observe that this extends the popular idea of success to the very gods; that they foster a success to you which is not a success to all; that fortunate men, fortunate youths exist, whose good is not virtue or the public good, but a private good,

robbed from the rest. It is a midsummer madness, corrupting all who hold the tenet. The demonologic is only a fine name for egotism; an exaggeration namely of the individual, whom it is Nature's settled purpose to postpone.[1] "There is one world common to all who are awake, but each sleeper betakes himself to one of his own."[2] Dreams retain the infirmities of our character. The good genius may be there or not, our evil genius is sure to stay. The Ego partial makes the dream; the Ego total the interpretation. Life is also a dream on the same terms.

The history of man is a series of conspiracies to win from Nature some advantage without paying for it. It is curious to see what grand powers we have a hint of and are mad to grasp, yet how slow Heaven is to trust us with such edge-tools. "All that frees talent without increasing self-command is noxious." Thus the fabled ring of Gyges, making the wearer invisible, which is represented in modern fable by the telescope as used by Schlemil, is simply mischievous.[3] A new or private language, used to serve only low or political purposes; the transfusion of the blood; the steam battery, so fatal as to put an end to war by the threat of universal murder;

the desired discovery of the guided balloon, are of this kind. Tramps are troublesome enough in the city and in the highways, but tramps flying through the air and descending on the lonely traveller or the lonely farmer's house or the bank-messenger in the country, can well be spared. Men are not fit to be trusted with these talismans.

Before we acquire great power we must acquire wisdom to use it well. Animal magnetism inspires the prudent and moral with a certain terror; so the divination of contingent events, and the alleged second-sight of the pseudo-spiritualists. There are many things of which a wise man might wish to be ignorant, and these are such. Shun them as you would the secrets of the undertaker and the butcher. The best are never demoniacal or magnetic; leave this limbo to the Prince of the power of the air. The lowest angel is better. It is the height of the animal; below the region of the divine. Power as such is not known to the angels.

Great men feel that they are so by sacrificing their selfishness and falling back on what is humane; in renouncing family, clan, country and each exclusive and local connection, to beat with the pulse and breathe with the lungs of nations.

A Highland chief, an Indian sachem or a feudal baron may fancy that the mountains and lakes were made specially for him Donald, or him Tecumseh; that the one question for history is the pedigree of his house, and future ages will be busy with his renown; that he has a guardian angel; that he is not in the roll of common men, but obeys a high family destiny; when he acts, unheard-of success evinces the presence of rare agents; what is to befall him, omens and coincidences foreshow; when he dies, banshees will announce his fate to kinsmen in foreign parts.[1] What more facile than to project this exuberant selfhood into the region where individuality is forever bounded by generic and cosmical laws? The deepest flattery, and that to which we can never be insensible, is the flattery of omens.

We may make great eyes if we like, and say of one on whom the sun shines, "What luck presides over him!" But we know that the law of the Universe is one for each and for all. There is as precise and as describable a reason for every fact occurring to him, as for any occurring to any man. Every fact in which the moral elements intermingle is not the less under the dominion of fatal law. Lord Bacon uncovers the

magic when he says, "Manifest virtues procure reputation; occult ones, fortune." Thus the so-called fortunate man is one who, though not gifted to speak when the people listen, or to act with grace or with understanding to great ends, yet is one who, in actions of a low or common pitch, relies on his instincts, and simply does not act where he should not, but waits his time, and without effort acts when the need is. If to this you add a fitness to the society around him, you have the elements of fortune; so that in a particular circle and knot of affairs he is not so much his own man as the hand of Nature and time. Just as his eye and hand work exactly together, — and to hit the mark with a stone he has only to fasten his eye firmly on the mark and his arm will swing true, — so the main ambition and genius being bestowed in one direction, the lesser spirit and involuntary aids within his sphere will follow. The fault of most men is that they are busybodies; do not wait the simple movement of the soul, but interfere and thwart the instructions of their own minds.[1]

Coincidences, dreams, animal magnetism, omens, sacred lots, have great interest for some minds. They run into this twilight and say, "There 's more than is dreamed of in your phi-

losophy." Certainly these facts are interesting, and deserve to be considered. But they are entitled only to a share of attention, and not a large share. *Nil magnificum, nil generosum sapit.* Let their value as exclusive subjects of attention be judged of by the infallible test of the state of mind in which much notice of them leaves us. Read a page of Cudworth or of Bacon, and we are exhilarated and armed to manly duties. Read demonology or Colquhoun's Report, and we are bewildered and perhaps a little besmirched.[1] We grope. They who love them say they are to reveal to us a world of unknown, unsuspected truths. But suppose a diligent collection and study of these occult facts were made, they are merely physiological, semi-medical, related to the machinery of man, opening to our curiosity how we live, and no aid on the superior problems why we live, and what we do. While the dilettanti have been prying into the humors and muscles of the eye, simple men will have helped themselves and the world by using their eyes.[2]

And this is not the least remarkable fact which the adepts have developed. Men who had never wondered at anything, who had thought it the most natural thing in the world that they should

exist in this orderly and replenished world, have been unable to suppress their amazement at the disclosures of the somnambulist. The peculiarity of the history of Animal Magnetism is that it drew in as inquirers and students a class of persons never on any other occasion known as students and inquirers. Of course the inquiry is pursued on low principles. Animal Magnetism peeps. It becomes in such hands a black art. The uses of the thing, the commodity, the power, at once come to mind and direct the course of inquiry. It seemed to open again that door which was open to the imagination of childhood — of magicians and fairies and lamps of Aladdin, the travelling cloak, the shoes of swiftness and the sword of sharpness that were to satisfy the uttermost wish of the senses without danger or a drop of sweat. But as Nature can never be outwitted, as in the Universe no man was ever known to get a cent's worth without paying in some form or other the cent, so this prodigious promiser ends always and always will, as sorcery and alchemy have done before, in very small and smoky performance.[1]

Mesmerism is high life below stairs; Momus playing Jove in the kitchens of Olympus. 'T is a low curiosity or lust of structure, and is sepa-

rated by celestial diameters from the love of spiritual truths. It is wholly a false view to couple these things in any manner with the religious nature and sentiment, and a most dangerous superstition to raise them to the lofty place of motives and sanctions. This is to prefer halos and rainbows to the sun and moon. These adepts have mistaken flatulency for inspiration. Were this drivel which they report as the voice of spirits really such, we must find out a more decisive suicide. I say to the table-rappers: —

> "I well believe
> Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
> And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate." [1]

They are ignorant of all that is healthy and useful to know, and by laws of kind, — dunces seeking dunces in the dark of what they call the spiritual world, — preferring snores and gastric noises to the voice of any muse. I think the rappings a new test, like blue litmus or other chemical absorbent, to try catechisms with. It detects organic skepticism in the very heads of the Church. 'T is a lawless world. We have left the geometry, the compensation, and the conscience of the daily world, and come into the realm or chaos of chance and pretty or ugly

confusion; no guilt and no virtue, but a droll bedlam, where everybody believes only after his humor, and the actors and spectators have no conscience or reflection, no police, no foot-rule, no sanity, — nothing but whim and whim creative.[1]

Meantime far be from me the impatience which cannot brook the supernatural, the vast; far be from me the lust of explaining away all which appeals to the imagination, and the great presentiments which haunt us. Willingly I too say, Hail! to the unknown awful powers which transcend the ken of the understanding. And the attraction which this topic has had for me and which induces me to unfold its parts before you is precisely because I think the numberless forms in which this superstition has reappeared in every time and every people indicates the inextinguishableness of wonder in man; betrays his conviction that behind all your explanations is a vast and potent and living Nature, inexhaustible and sublime, which you cannot explain. He is sure no book, no man has told him all. He is sure the great Instinct, the circumambient soul which flows into him as into all, and is his life, has not been searched. He is sure that intimate relations subsist between his character and

his fortunes, between him and his world; and until he can adequately tell them he will tell them wildly and fabulously. Demonology is the shadow of Theology.[1]

The whole world is an omen and a sign. Why look so wistfully in a corner? Man is the Image of God. Why run after a ghost or a dream? The voice of divination resounds everywhere and runs to waste unheard, unregarded, as the mountains echo with the bleatings of cattle.[2]

II

ARISTOCRACY

"But for ye speken of such gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen, —
Such arrogance n' is not worth a hen.
Look who that is most virtuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentil dedés that he can,
And take him for the greatest gentilman.

"Take fire and beare it into the derkest hous
Betwixt this and the mount of Caucasus
And let men shut the dorés, and go thenne,
Yet wol the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;
His office natural ay wol it hold,
Up peril of my lif, til that it die.

"Here may ye see wel, how that genterie
Is not annexed to possession,
Sith folk ne don their operation
Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind,
For God it wot, men may full often find
A lorde's son do shame and vilanie.
And he that wol have prize of his genterie,
For he was boren of a gentil house,
And had his elders noble and virtuous,

And n' ill hinselven do no gentil dedes,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie, that dead is,
He n' is not gentil, be he duke or erl;
For vilaines' sinful dedés make a churl.
Than cometh our very gentillesse of grace,
It was no thing bequethed us with our place."

CHAUCER, "The Knighte's Tale."

ARISTOCRACY

THERE is an attractive topic, which never goes out of vogue and is impertinent in no community, — the permanent traits of the Aristocracy. It is an interest of the human race, and, as I look at it, inevitable, sacred and to be found in every country and in every company of men. My concern with it is that concern which all well-disposed persons will feel, that there should be model men, — true instead of spurious pictures of excellence, and, if possible, living standards.

I observe that the word *gentleman* is gladly heard in all companies; that the cogent motive with the best young men who are revolving plans and forming resolutions for the future, is the spirit of honor, the wish to be gentlemen. They do not yet covet political power, nor any exuberance of wealth, wealth that costs too much; nor do they wish to be saints; for fear of partialism; but the middle term, the reconciling element, the success of the manly character, they find in the idea of gentleman. It is not to be a man of rank, but a man of honor, accomplished in all arts and generosities, which seems to them

the right mark and the true chief of our modern society. A reference to society is part of the idea of culture; science of a gentleman; art of a gentleman; poetry in a gentleman: intellectually held, that is, for their own sake, for what they are; for their universal beauty and worth; — not for economy, which degrades them, but not over-intellectually, that is, not to ecstasy, entrancing the man, but redounding to his beauty and glory.

In the sketches which I have to offer I shall not be surprised if my readers should fancy that I am giving them, under a gayer title, a chapter on Education. It will not pain me if I am found now and then to rove from the accepted and historic, to a theoretic peerage; or if it should turn out, what is true, that I am describing a real aristocracy, a chapter of Templars who sit indifferently in all climates and under the shadow of all institutions, but so few, so heedless of badges, so rarely convened, so little in sympathy with the predominant politics of nations, that their names and doings are not recorded in any Book of Peerage, or any Court Journal, or even Daily Newspaper of the world.

I find the caste in the man. The Golden Book of Venice, the scale of European chivalry, the

Barons of England, the hierarchy of India with its impassable degrees, is each a transcript of the decigrade or centigraded Man. A many-chambered Aristocracy lies already organized in his moods and faculties. Room is found for all the departments of the state in the moods and faculties of each human spirit, with separate function and difference of dignity.

The terrible aristocracy that is in Nature. Real people dwelling with the real, face to face, undaunted: then, far down, people of taste, people dwelling in a relation, or rumor, or influence of good and fair, entertained by it, superficially touched, yet charmed by these shadows: — and, far below these, gross and thoughtless, the animal man, billows of chaos, down to the dancing and menial organizations.

I observe the inextinguishable prejudice men have in favor of a hereditary transmission of qualities. It is in vain to remind them that Nature appears capricious. Some qualities she carefully fixes and transmits, but some, and those the finer, she exhales with the breath of the individual, as too costly to perpetuate. But I notice also that they may become fixed and permanent in any stock, by painting and repainting them on every individual, until at last Nature

adopts them and bakes them into her porcelain.

At all events I take this inextinguishable persuasion in men's minds as a hint from the outward universe to man to inlay as many virtues and superiorities as he can into this swift fresco of the day, which is hardening to an immortal picture.[1]

If one thinks of the interest which all men have in beauty of character and manners; that it is of the last importance to the imagination and affection, inspiring as it does that loyalty and worship so essential to the finish of character, — certainly, if culture, if laws, if primogeniture, if heraldry, if money could secure such a result as superior and finished men, it would be the interest of all mankind to see that the steps were taken, the pains incurred. No taxation, no concession, no conferring of privileges never so exalted would be a price too large.

The old French Revolution attracted to its first movement all the liberality, virtue, hope and poetry in Europe. By the abolition of kingship and aristocracy, tyranny, inequality and poverty would end. Alas! no; tyranny, inequality, poverty, stood as fast and fierce as ever. We likewise put faith in Democracy; in the Republican

principle carried out to the extremes of practice in universal suffrage, in the will of majorities The young adventurer finds that the relations of society, the position of classes, irk and sting him, and he lends himself to each malignant party that assails what is eminent. He will one day know that this is not removable, but a distinction in the nature of things; that neither the caucus, nor the newspaper, nor the Congress, nor the mob, nor the guillotine, nor fire, nor all together, can avail to outlaw, cut out, burn or destroy the offence of superiority in persons. The manners, the pretension, which annoy me so much, are not superficial, but built on a real distinction in the nature of my companion. The superiority in him is inferiority in me, and if this particular companion were wiped by a sponge out of Nature, my inferiority would still be made evident to me by other persons everywhere and every day.

No, not the hardest utilitarian will question the value of an aristocracy if he love himself. For every man confesses that the highest good which the universe proposes to him is the highest society. If a few grand natures should come to us and weave duties and offices between us and them, it would make our bread ambrosial.

I affirm that inequalities exist, not in costume, but in the powers of expression and action; a primitive aristocracy; and that we, certainly, have not come here to describe well-dressed vulgarity. I cannot tell how English titles are bestowed, whether on pure blood, or on the largest holder in the three-per-cents. The English government and people, or the French government, may easily make mistakes; but Nature makes none. Every mark and scutcheon of hers indicates constitutional qualities. In science, in trade, in social discourse, as in the state, it is the same thing. Forever and ever it takes a pound to lift a pound.[1]

It is plain that all the deference of modern society to this idea of the Gentleman, and all the whimsical tyranny of Fashion which has continued to engraft itself on this reverence, is a secret homage to reality and love which ought to reside in every man. This is the steel that is hid under gauze and lace, under flowers and spangles. And it is plain that instead of this idolatry, a worship; instead of this impure, a pure reverence for character, a new respect for the sacredness of the individual man, is that antidote which must correct in our country the disgraceful deference to public opinion, and the

insane subordination of the end to the means. From the folly of too much association we must come back to the repose of self-reverence and trust.

The game of the world is a perpetual trial of strength between man and events. The common man is the victim of events. Whatever happens is too much for him, he is drawn this way and that way, and his whole life is a hurry. The superior man is at home in his own mind. We like cool people, who neither hope nor fear too much, but seem to have many strings to their bow, and can survive the blow well enough if stock should rise or fall, if parties should be broken up, if their money or their family should be dispersed; who can stand a slander very well; indeed on whom events make little or no impression, and who can face death with firmness. In short, we dislike every mark of a superficial life and action, and prize whatever mark of a central life.'

What is the meaning of this invincible respect for war, here in the triumphs of our commercial civilization, that we can never quite smother the trumpet and the drum? How is it that the sword runs away with all the fame from the spade and the wheel? How sturdy seem to us

in the history, those Merovingians, Guelphs, Dorias, Sforzas, Burgundies and Guesclins of the old warlike ages! We can hardly believe they were all such speedy shadows as we; that an ague or fever, a drop of water or a crystal of ice ended them. We give soldiers the same advantage to-day. From the most accumulated culture we are always running back to the sound of any drum and fife. And in any trade, or in law-courts, in orchard and farm, and even in saloons, they only prosper or they prosper best who have a military mind, who engineer in sword and cannon style, with energy and sharpness. Why, but because courage never loses its high price? Why, but because we wish to see those to whom existence is most adorned and attractive, foremost to peril it for their object, and ready to answer for their actions with their life.[1]

The existence of an upper class is not injurious, as long as it is dependent on merit. For so long it is provocation to the bold and generous. These distinctions exist, and they are deep, not to be talked or voted away. If the differences are organic, so are the merits, that is to say the power and excellence we describe are real. Aristocracy is the class eminent by personal qualities, and to them belongs without assertion a

proper influence. Men of aim must lead the aimless; men of invention the uninventive. I wish catholic men, who by their science and skill are at home in every latitude and longitude, who carry the world in their thoughts; men of universal politics, who are interested in things in proportion to their truth and magnitude; who know the beauty of animals and the laws of their nature, whom the mystery of botany allures, and the mineral laws; who see general effects and are not too learned to love the Imagination, the power and the spirits of Solitude; — men who see the dance in men's lives as well as in a ball-room, and can feel and convey the sense which is only collectively or totally expressed by a population; men who are charmed by the beautiful Nemesis as well as by the dire Nemesis, and dare trust their inspiration for their welcome; who would find their fellows in persons of real elevation of whatever kind of speculative or practical ability. We are fallen on times so acquiescent and traditionary that we are in danger of forgetting so simple a fact as that the basis of all aristocracy must be truth, — the doing what elsewhere is pretended to be done. One would gladly see all our institutions rightly aristocratic in this wise.

I enumerate the claims by which men enter the superior class.

1. A commanding talent. In every company one finds the best man; and if there be any question, it is decided the instant they enter into any practical enterprise. If the finders of glass, gunpowder, printing, electricity, — if the healer of small-pox, the contriver of the safety-lamp, of the aqueduct, of the bridge, of the tunnel; if the finders of parallax, of new planets, of steam power for boat and carriage, the finder of sulphuric ether and the electric telegraph, — if these men should keep their secrets, or only communicate them to each other, must not the whole race of mankind serve them as gods? It only needs to look at the social aspect of England and America and France, to see the rank which original practical talent commands.

Every survey of the dignified classes, in ancient or modern history, imprints universal lessons, and establishes a nobility of a prouder creation. And the conclusion which Roman Senators, Indian Brahmins, Persian Magians, European Nobles and great Americans inculcate, — that which they preach out of their material wealth and glitter, out of their old war and modern land-owning, even out of sensuality and

sneers, is, that the radical and essential distinctions of every aristocracy are moral. Do not hearken to the men, but to the Destiny in the institutions. An aristocracy is composed of simple and sincere men for whom Nature and ethics are strong enough, who say what they mean and go straight to their objects. It is essentially real.[1]

The multiplication of monarchs known by telegraph and daily news from all countries to the daily papers, and the effect of freer institutions in England and America, has robbed the title of king of all its romance, as that of our commercial consuls as compared with the ancient Roman. We shall come to add "Kings" in the "Contents" of the Directory, as we do "Physicians," "Brokers," etc. In simple communities, in the heroic ages, a man was chosen for his knack; got his name, rank and living for that; and the best of the best was the aristocrat or king. In the Norse Edda it appears as the curious but excellent policy of contending tribes, when tired of war, to exchange hostages, and in reality each to adopt from the other a first-rate man, who thus acquired a new country; was at once made a chief. And no wrong was so keenly resented as any fraud in this transaction. In the heroic ages, as we call them,

the hero uniformly has some real talent. Ulysses in Homer is represented as a very skilful carpenter. He builds the boat with which he leaves Calypso's isle, and in his own palace carves a bedstead out of the trunk of a tree and inlays it with gold and ivory. Epeus builds the wooden horse. The English nation down to a late age inherited the reality of the Northern stock. In 1373, in writs of summons of members of Parliament, the sheriff of every county is to cause "two dubbed knights, or the most worthy esquires, the most expert in feats of arms, and no others; and of every city, two citizens, and of every borough, two burgesses, such as have greatest skill in shipping and merchandising, to be returned."

The ancients were fond of ascribing to their nobles gigantic proportions and strength. The hero must have the force of ten men. The chief is taller by a head than any of his tribe. Douglas can throw the bar a greater cast. Richard can sever the iron bolt with his sword. The horn of Roland, in the romance, is heard sixty miles. The Cid has a prevailing health that will let him nurse the leper, and share his bed without harm.[1] And since the body is the pipe through which we tap all the succors and virtues of the material

world, it is certain that a sound body must be at the root of any excellence in manners and actions; a strong and supple frame which yields a stock of strength and spirits for all the needs of the day, and generates the habit of relying on a supply of power for all extraordinary exertions. When Nature goes to create a national man, she puts a symmetry between the physical and intellectual powers. She moulds a large brain, and joins to it a great trunk to supply it; as if a fine alembic were fed with liquor for its distillations from broad full vats in the vaults of the laboratory.

Certainly, the origin of most of the perversities and absurdities that disgust us is, primarily, the want of health. Genius is health and Beauty is health and Virtue is health. The petty arts which we blame in the half-great seem as odious to them also; — the resources of weakness and despair. And the manners betray the like puny constitution. Temperament is fortune, and we must say it so often. In a thousand cups of life, only one is the right mixture, — a fine adjustment to the existing elements.[1] When that befalls, when the well-mixed man is born, with eyes not too dull nor too good, with fire enough and earth enough, capable of impressions from all things, and not too susceptible, — then no gift need be bestowed

on him, he brings with him fortune, followers, love, power.

> "I think he 'll be to Rome
> As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
> By sovereignty of nature." [1]

Not the phrenologist but the philosopher may well say, Let me see his brain, and I will tell you if he shall be poet, king, founder of cities, rich, magnetic, of a secure hand, of a scientific memory, a right classifier; or whether he shall be a bungler, driveller, unlucky, heavy and tedious.

It were to dispute against the sun, to deny this difference of brain.[2] I see well enough that when I bring one man into an estate, he sees vague capabilities, what others might, could, would or should do with it. If I bring another, he sees what *he* should do with it. He appreciates the water-privilege, land fit for orchard, tillage, pasturage, wood-lot, cranberry-meadow; but just as easily he foresees all the means, all the steps of the process, and could lay his hand as readily on one as on another point in that series which opens the capability to the last point. The poet sees wishfully enough the result; the well-built head supplies all the steps, one as perfect as the other, in the series. Seeing this working head in him, it becomes to me as certain that he will

have the direction of estates, as that there are estates. If we see tools in a magazine, as a file, an anchor, a plough, a pump, a paint-brush, a cider-press, a diving-bell, we can predict well enough their destination; and the man's associations, fortunes, love, hatred, residence, rank, the books he will buy, the roads he will traverse are predetermined in his organism. Men will need him, and he is rich and eminent by nature. That man cannot be too late or too early.[1] Let him not hurry or hesitate. Though millions are already arrived, his seat is reserved. Though millions attend, they only multiply his friends and agents. It never troubles the Senator what multitudes crack the benches and bend the galleries to hear. He who understands the art of war, reckons the hostile battalions and cities, opportunities and spoils.

An aristocracy could not exist unless it were organic. Men are born to command, and — it is even so — "come into the world booted and spurred to ride."[2] The blood royal never pays, we say. It obtains service, gifts, supplies, furtherance of all kinds from the love and joy of those who feel themselves honored by the service they render.

Dull people think it Fortune that makes one rich and another poor. Is it? Yes, but the for-

tune was earlier than they think, namely, in the balance or adjustment between devotion to what is agreeable to-day and the forecast of what will be valuable to-morrow.

Certainly I am not going to argue the merits of gradation in the universe; the existing order of more or less. Neither do I wish to go into a vindication of the justice that disposes the variety of lot. I know how steep the contrast of condition looks; such excess here and such destitution there; like entire chance, like the freaks of the wind, heaping the snow-drift in gorges, stripping the plain; such despotism of wealth and comfort in banquet-halls, whilst death is in the pots of the wretched, — that it behooves a good man to walk with tenderness and heed amidst so much suffering.' I only point in passing to the order of the universe, which makes a rotation, — not like the coarse policy of the Greeks, ten generals, each commanding one day and then giving place to the next, or like our democratic politics, my turn now, your turn next, — but the constitution of things has distributed a new quality or talent to each mind, and the revolution of things is always bringing the need, now of this, now of that, and is sure to bring home the opportunity to every one.

The only relief that I know against the invidiousness of superior position is, that you exert your faculty; for whilst each does that, he excludes hard thoughts from the spectator. All right activity is amiable. I never feel that any man occupies my place, but that the reason why I do not have what I wish, is, that I want the faculty which entitles. All spiritual or real power makes its own place.

We pass for what we are, and we prosper or fail by what we are. There are men who may dare much and will be justified in their daring. But it is because they know they are in their place. As long as I am in my place, I am safe. "The best lightning-rod for your protection is your own spine."[1] Let a man's social aims be proportioned to his means and power. I do not pity the misery of a man underplaced: that will right itself presently: but I pity the man overplaced. A certain quantity of power belongs to a certain quantity of faculty. Whoever wants more power than is the legitimate attraction of his faculty, is a politician, and must pay for that excess; must truckle for it. This is the whole game of society and the politics of the world. Being will always seem well; — but whether possibly I cannot contrive to seem, without the trouble of being?

Every Frenchman would have a career. We English are not any better with our love of making a figure. "I told the Duke of Newcastle," says Bubb Dodington in his Memoirs, "that it must end one way or another, it must not remain as it was; for I was determined to make some sort of a figure in life; I earnestly wished it might be under his protection, but if that could not be, I must make some figure; what it would be I could not determine yet; I must look round me a little and consult my friends, but some figure I was resolved to make."

It will be agreed everywhere that society must have the benefit of the best leaders. How to obtain them? Birth has been tried and failed. Caste in India has no good result. Ennobling of one family is good for one generation; not sure beyond. Slavery had mischief enough to answer for, but it had this good in it, — the pricing of men. In the South a slave was bluntly but accurately valued at five hundred to a thousand dollars, if a good field-hand; if a mechanic, as carpenter or smith, twelve hundred or two thousand. In Rome or Greece what sums would not be paid for a superior slave, a confidential secretary and manager, an educated slave; a man of genius, a Moses educated in Egypt? I don't

know how much Epictetus was sold for, or Æsop, or Toussaint l'Ouverture, and perhaps it was not a good market-day.[1] Time was, in England, when the state stipulated beforehand what price should be paid for each citizen's life, if he was killed. Now, if it were possible, I should like to see that appraisal applied to every man, and every man made acquainted with the true number and weight of every adult citizen, and that he be placed where he belongs, with so much power confided to him as he could carry and use.

In the absence of such anthropometer I have a perfect confidence in the natural laws. I think that the community — every community, if obstructing laws and usages are removed — will be the best measure and the justest judge of the citizen, or will in the long run give the fairest verdict and reward; better than any royal patronage; better than any premium on race; better than any statute elevating families to hereditary distinction, or any class to sacerdotal education and power. The verdict of battles will best prove the general; the town-meeting, the Congress, will not fail to find out legislative talent. The prerogatives of a right physician are determined, not by his diplomas, but by the health he re-

stores to body and mind; the powers of a geometer by solving his problem; of a priest by the act of inspiring us with a sentiment which disperses the grief from which we suffered. When the lawyer tries his case in court he himself is also on trial and his own merits appear as well as his client's. When old writers are consulted by young writers who have written their first book, they say, Publish it by all means; so only can you certainly know its quality.

But we venture to put any man in any place. It is curious how negligent the public is of the essential qualifications of its representatives. They ask if a man is a Republican, a Democrat? Yes. Is he a man of talent? Yes. Is he honest and not looking for an office or any manner of bribe? He is honest. Well then choose him by acclamation. And they go home and tell their wives with great satisfaction what a good thing they have done. But they forgot to ask the fourth question, not less important than either of the others, and without which the others do not avail. Has he a will? Can he carry his points against opposition? Probably not.[1] It is not sufficient that your work follows your genius, or is organic, to give you the magnetic power over men. More than taste and talent

must go to the Will. That must also be a gift of Nature. It is in some; it is not in others. But I should say, if it is not in you, you had better not put yourself in places where not to have it is to be a public enemy.

The expectation and claims of mankind indicate the duties of this class. Some service they must pay. We do not expect them to be saints, and it is very pleasing to see the instinct of mankind on this matter, — how much they will forgive to such as pay substantial service and work energetically after their kind; but they do not extend the same indulgence to those who claim and enjoy the same prerogative but render no returns. The day is darkened when the golden river runs down into mud; when genius grows idle and wanton and reckless of its fine duties of being Saint, Prophet, Inspirer to its humble fellows, balks their respect and confounds their understanding by silly extravagances. To a right aristocracy, to Hercules, to Theseus, Odin, the Cid, Napoleon; to Sir Robert Walpole, to Fox, Chatham, Mirabeau, Jefferson, O'Connell; — to the men, that is, who are incomparably superior to the populace in ways agreeable to the populace, showing them the way they should go, doing for them what they wish done and cannot

do; — of course everything will be permitted and pardoned, — gaming, drinking, fighting, luxury. These are the heads of party, who can do no wrong, — everything short of infamous crime will pass. But if those who merely sit in their places and are not, like them, able; if the dressed and perfumed gentleman, who serves the people in no wise and adorns them not, is not even *not afraid of them*, if such an one go about to set ill examples and corrupt them, who shall blame them if they burn his barns, insult his children, assault his person, and express their unequivocal indignation and contempt? He eats their bread, he does not scorn to live by their labor, and after breakfast he cannot remember that there are human beings. To live without duties is obscene.[1]

2. Genius, what is so called in strictness, — the power to affect the Imagination, as possessed by the orator, the poet, the novelist or the artist, — has a royal right in all possessions and privileges, being itself representative and accepted by all men as their delegate. It has indeed the best right, because it raises men above themselves, intoxicates them with beauty. They are honored by rendering it honor, and the reason of this allowance is that Genius unlocks for all men

the chains of use, temperament and drudgery, and gives them a sense of delicious liberty and power.

The first example that occurs is an extraordinary gift of eloquence. A man who has that possession of his means and that magnetism that he can at all times carry the convictions of a public assembly, we must respect, and he is thereby ennobled. He has the freedom of the city. He is entitled to neglect trifles. Like a great general, or a great poet, or a millionaire, he may wear his coat out at elbows, and his hat on his feet, if he will. He has established relation, representativeness. The best feat of genius is to bring all the varieties of talent and culture into its audience; the mediocre and the dull are reached as well as the intelligent. I have seen it conspicuously shown in a village. Here are classes which day by day have no intercourse, nothing beyond perhaps a surly nod in passing. But I have seen a man of teeming brain come among these men, so full of his facts, so unable to suppress them, that he has poured out a river of knowledge to all comers, and drawing all these men round him, all sorts of men, interested the whole village, good and bad, bright and stupid, in his facts; the iron boundary lines had all faded

away; the stupid had discovered that they were not stupid; the coldest had found themselves drawn to their neighbors by interest in the same things. This was a naturalist.[1]

The more familiar examples of this power certainly are those who establish a wider dominion over men's minds than any speech can; who think, and paint, and laugh, and weep, in their eloquent closets, and then convert the world into a huge whispering-gallery, to report the tale to all men, and win smiles and tears from many generations. The eminent examples are Shakspeare, Cervantes, Bunyan, Burns, Scott, and now we must add Dickens. In the fine arts, I find none in the present age who have any popular power, who have achieved any nobility by ennobling the people.

3. Elevation of sentiment, refining and inspiring the manners, must really take the place of every distinction whether of material power or of intellectual gifts. The manners of course must have that depth and firmness of tone to attest their centrality in the nature of the man. I mean the things themselves shall be judges, and determine. In the presence of this nobility even genius must stand aside. For the two poles of nature are Beauty and Meanness, and noble

sentiment is the highest form of Beauty.[1] He is beautiful in face, in port, in manners, who is absorbed in objects which he truly believes to be superior to himself. Is there any parchment or any cosmetic or any blood that can obtain homage like that security of air presupposing so undoubtingly the sympathy of men in his designs? What is it that makes the true knight? Loyalty to his thought. That makes the beautiful scorn, the elegant simplicity, the directness, the commanding port which all men admire and which men not noble affect. For the thought has no debts, no hunger, no lusts, no low obligations or relations, no intrigue or business, no murder, no envy, no crime, but large leisures and an inviting future.[2]

The service we receive from the great is a mutual deference. If you deal with the vulgar, life is reduced to beggary indeed. The astronomers are very eager to know whether the moon has an atmosphere; I am only concerned that every man have one. I observe, however, that it takes two to make an atmosphere. I am acquainted with persons who go attended with this ambient cloud. It is sufficient that they come. It is not important what they say. The sun and the evening sky are not calmer. They seem to

have arrived at the fact, to have got rid of the show, and to be serene. Their manners and behavior in the house and in the field are those of men at rest: what have they to conceal? what have they to exhibit? Others I meet, who have no deference, and who denude and strip one of all attributes but material values. As much health and muscle as you have, as much land, as much house-room and dinner, avails. Of course a man is a poor bag of bones. There is no gracious interval, not an inch allowed. Bone rubs against bone. Life is thus a Beggar's Bush. I know nothing which induces so base and forlorn a feeling as when we are treated for our utilities, as economists do, starving the imagination and the sentiment. In this impoverishing animation, I seem to meet a Hunger, a wolf. Rather let us be alone whilst we live, than encounter these lean kine. Man should emancipate man. He does so, not by jamming him, but by distancing him. The nearer my friend, the more spacious is our realm, the more diameter our spheres have. It is a measure of culture, the number of things taken for granted. When a man begins to speak, the churl will take him up by disputing his first words, so he cannot come at his scope. The wise man takes

all for granted until he sees the parallelism of that which puzzled him with his own view.[1]

I will not protract this discourse by describing the duties of the brave and generous. And yet I will venture to name one, and the same is almost the sole condition on which knighthood is to be won; this, namely, loyalty to your own order. The true aristocrat is he who is at the head of his own order, and disloyalty is to mistake other chivalries for his own.[2] Let him not divide his homage, but stand for that which he was born and set to maintain. It was objected to Gustavus that he did not better distinguish between the duties of a carabine and a general, but exposed himself to all dangers and was too prodigal of a blood so precious. For a soul on which elevated duties are laid will so realize its special and lofty duties as not to be in danger of assuming through a low generosity those which do not belong to it.

There are all degrees of nobility, but amid the levity and giddiness of people one looks round, as for a tower of strength, on some self-dependent mind, who does not go abroad for an estimate, and has long ago made up its conclusion that it is impossible to fail.[3] The great Indian sages had a lesson for the Brahmin,

which every day returns to mind, "All that depends on another gives pain; all that depend on himself gives pleasure; in these few words is the definition of pleasure and pain." The noble mind is here to teach us that failure is a part of success. Prosperity and pound-cake are for very young gentlemen, whom such things content; but a hero's, a man's success is made up of failures, because he experiments and ventures every day, and "the more falls he gets, moves faster on;"[1] defeated all the time and yet to victory born. I have heard that in horsemanship he is not the good rider who never was thrown, but rather that a man never will be a good rider until he is thrown; then he will not be haunted any longer by the terror that he shall tumble, and will ride; — that is his business, — to *ride*, whether with falls or whether with none, to ride unto the place whither he is bound. And I know no such unquestionable badge and ensign of a sovereign mind, as that tenacity of purpose which, through all change of companions, of parties, of fortunes, — changes never, bates no jot of heart or hope, but wearies out opposition, and arrives at its port. In his consciousness of deserving success, the caliph Ali constantly neglected the ordinary means of attaining it,[2] and

to the grand interests, a superficial success is of no account. It prospers as well in mistake as in luck, in obstruction and nonsense, as well as among the angels; it reckons fortunes mere paint; difficulty is its delight: perplexity is its noonday: minds that make their way without winds and against tides. But these are rare and difficult examples, we can only indicate them to show how high is the range of the realm of Honor.

I know the feeling of the most ingenious and excellent youth in America; I hear the complaint of the aspirant that we have no prizes offered to the ambition of virtuous young men; that there is no Theban Band; no stern exclusive Legion of Honor, to be entered only by long and real service and patient climbing up all the steps. We have a rich men's aristocracy, plenty of bribes for those who like them; but a grand style of culture, which, without injury, an ardent youth can propose to himself as a Pharos through long dark years, does not exist, and there is no substitute. The youth, having got through the first thickets that oppose his entrance into life, having got into decent society, is left to himself, and falls abroad with too much freedom. But in the hours of insight we rally

against this skepticism. We then see that if the ignorant are around us, the great are much more near ; that there is an order of men, never quite absent, who enroll no names in their archives but of such as are capable of truth. They are gathered in no one chamber ; no chamber would hold them ; but, out of the vast duration of man's race, they tower like mountains, and are present to every mind in proportion to its likeness to theirs. The solitariest man who shares their spirit walks environed by them ; they talk to him, they comfort him, and happy is he who prefers these associates to profane companions. They also take shape in men, in women. There is no heroic trait, no sentiment or thought that will not sometime embody itself in the form of a friend. That highest good of rational existence is always coming to such as reject mean alliances.

One trait more we must celebrate, the self-reliance which is the patent of royal natures. It is so prized a jewel that it is sure to be tested. The rules and discipline are ordered for that. The Golden Table never lacks members ; all its seats are kept full ; but with this strange provision, that the members are carefully withdrawn into deep niches, so that no one of them can see

any other of them, and each believes himself alone. In the presence of the Chapter it is easy for each member to carry himself royally and well; but in the absence of his colleagues and in the presence of mean people he is tempted to accept the low customs of towns. The honor of a member consists in an indifferency to the persons and practices about him, and in the pursuing undisturbed the career of a Brother, as if always in their presence, and as if no other existed. Give up, once for all, the hope of approbation from the people in the street, if you are pursuing great ends. How can they guess your designs?

All reference to models, all comparison with neighboring abilities and reputations, is the road to mediocrity. The generous soul, on arriving in a new port, makes instant preparation for a new voyage. By experiment, by original studies, by secret obedience, he has made a place for himself in the world; stands there a real, substantial, unprecedented person, and when the great come by, as always there are angels walking in the earth, they know him at sight. Effectual service in his own legitimate fashion distinguishes the true man. For he is to know that the distinction of a royal nature is a great heart;

that not Louis Quatorze, not Chesterfield, nor Byron, nor Bonaparte is the model of the Century, but, wherever found, the old renown attaches to the virtues of simple faith and stanch endurance and clear perception and plain speech, and that there is a master grace and dignity communicated by exalted sentiments to a human form, to which utility and even genius must do homage. And it is the sign and badge of this nobility, the drawing his counsel from his own breast. For to every gentleman grave and dangerous duties are proposed. Justice always wants champions. The world waits for him as its defender, for he will find in the well-dressed crowd, yes, in the civility of whole nations, vulgarity of sentiment. In the best parlors of modern society he will find the laughing devil, the civil sneer; in English palaces the London twist, derision, coldness, contempt of the masses, contempt of Ireland, dislike of the Chartist. The English House of Commons is the proudest assembly of gentlemen in the world, yet the genius of the House of Commons, its legitimate expression, is a sneer.' In America he shall find deprecation of purism on all questions touching the morals of trade and of social customs, and the narrowest contraction of ethics to the one

duty of paying money. Pay that, and you may play the tyrant at discretion and never look back to the fatal question, — where had you the money that you paid?

I know the difficulties in the way of the man of honor. The man of honor is a man of taste and humanity. By tendency, like all magnanimous men, he is a democrat. But the revolution comes, and does he join the standard of Chartist and outlaw? No, for these have been dragged in their ignorance by furious chiefs to the Red Revolution; they are full of murder, and the student recoils, — and joins the rich. If he cannot vote with the poor, he should stay by himself. Let him accept the position of armed neutrality, abhorring the crimes of the Chartist, abhorring the selfishness of the rich, and say, 'The time will come when these poor *enfans perdus* of revolution will have instructed their party, if only by their fate, and wiser counsels will prevail; the music and the dance of liberty will come up to bright and holy ground and will take me in also. Then I shall not have forfeited my right to speak and act for mankind.' Meantime shame to the fop of learning and philosophy who suffers a vulgarity of speech and habit to blind him to the grosser vulgarity of

pitiless selfishness, and to hide from him the current of Tendency; who abandons his right position of being priest and poet of these impious and unpoetic doers of God's work. You must, for wisdom, for sanity, have some access to the mind and heart of the common humanity. The exclusive excludes himself. No great man has existed who did not rely on the sense and heart of mankind as represented by the good sense of the people, as correcting the modes and over-refinements and class prejudices of the lettered men of the world.

There are certain conditions in the highest degree favorable to the tranquillity of spirit and to that magnanimity we so prize. And mainly the habit of considering large interests, and things in masses, and not too much in detail. The habit of directing large affairs generates a nobility of thought in every mind of average ability. For affairs themselves show the way in which they should be handled; and a good head soon grows wise, and does not govern too much.

Now I believe in the closest affinity between moral and material power. Virtue and genius are always on the direct way to the control of the society in which they are found. It is the interest of society that good men should govern,

and there is always a tendency so to place them. But, for the day that now is, a man of generous spirit will not need to administer public offices or to direct large interests of trade, or war, or politics, or manufacture, but he will use a high prudence in the conduct of life to guard himself from being dissipated on many things. There is no need that he should count the pounds of property or the numbers of agents whom his influence touches; it suffices that his aims are high, that the interest of intellectual and moral beings is paramount with him, that he comes into what is called fine society from higher ground, and he has an elevation of habit which ministers of empires will be forced to see and to remember.

I do not know whether that word Gentleman, although it signifies a leading idea in recent civilization, is a sufficiently broad generalization to convey the deep and grave fact of self-reliance. To many the word expresses only the outsides of cultivated men, — only graceful manners, and independence in trifles; but the fountains of that thought are in the deeps of man, a beauty which reaches through and through, from the manners to the soul; an honor which is only a name for sanctity, a self-trust which is a trust in

God himself. Call it man of honor, or call it Man, the American who would serve his country must learn the beauty and honor of perseverance, he must reinforce himself by the power of character, and revisit the margin of that well from which his fathers drew waters of life and enthusiasm, the fountain I mean of the moral sentiments, the parent fountain from which this goodly Universe flows as a wave.

III

PERPETUAL FORCES

What central flowing forces, say,
Make up thy splendor, matchless day?

No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new,
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.

PERPETUAL FORCES

THE hero in the fairy-tales has a servant who can eat granite rocks, another who can hear the grass grow, and a third who can run a hundred leagues in half an hour; so man in Nature is surrounded by a gang of friendly giants who can accept harder stints than these, and help him in every kind. Each by itself has a certain omnipotence, but all, like contending kings and emperors, in the presence of each other, are antagonized and kept polite and own the balance of power.

We cannot afford to miss any advantage. Never was any man too strong for his proper work. Art is long, and life short, and he must supply this disproportion by borrowing and applying to his task the energies of Nature. Reinforce his self-respect, show him his means, his arsenal of forces, physical, metaphysical, immortal. Show him the riches of the poor, show him what mighty allies and helpers he has.[1] And though King David had no good from making his census out of vainglory, yet I find it wholesome and invigorating to enumerate the resources we can command, to look a little into

this arsenal, and see how many rounds of ammunition, what muskets, and how many arms better than Springfield muskets, we can bring to bear.

Go out of doors and get the air. Ah, if you knew what was in the air. See what your robust neighbor, who never feared to live in it, has got from it; strength, cheerfulness, power to convince, heartiness and equality to each event.

All the earths are burnt metals. One half the avoirdupois of the rocks which compose the solid crust of the globe consists of oxygen. The adamant is always passing into smoke;[1] the marble column, the brazen statue burn under the daylight, and would soon decompose if their molecular structure, disturbed by the raging sunlight, were not restored by the darkness of the night. What agencies of electricity, gravity, light, affinity combine to make every plant what it is, and in a manner so quiet that the presence of these tremendous powers is not ordinarily suspected. Faraday said, "A grain of water is known to have electric relations equivalent to a very powerful flash of lightning." The ripe fruit is dropped at last without violence, but the lightning fell and the storm raged, and strata were deposited and uptorn and bent back, and Chaos moved from beneath, to create and flavor the fruit on your

table to-day. The winds and the rains come back a thousand and a thousand times. The coal on your grate gives out in decomposing to-day exactly the same amount of light and heat which was taken from the sunshine in its formation in the leaves and boughs of the antediluvian tree.

Take up a spadeful or a buck-load of loam, who can guess what it holds? But a gardener knows that it is full of peaches, full of oranges, and he drops in a few seeds by way of keys to unlock and combine its virtues; lets it lie in sun and rain, and by and by it has lifted into the air its full weight in golden fruit.[1]

The earliest hymns of the world were hymns to these natural forces. The Vedas of India, which have a date older than Homer, are hymns to the winds, to the clouds, and to fire. They all have certain properties which adhere to them, such as conservation, persisting to be themselves, impossibility of being warped. The sun has lost no beams, the earth no elements; gravity is as adhesive, heat as expansive, light as joyful, air as virtuous, water as medicinal as on the first day. There is no loss, only transference. When the heat is less here it is not lost, but more heat is there. When the rain exceeds on the coast,

there is drought on the prairie. When the continent sinks, the opposite continent, that is to say, the opposite shore of the ocean, rises. Where life is less here, it spawns there.

These forces are in an ascending series, but seem to leave no room for the individual; man or atom, he only shares them; he sails the way these irresistible winds blow. But behind all these are finer elements, the sources of them, and much more rapid and strong; a new style and series, the spiritual. Intellect and morals appear only the material forces on a higher plane. The laws of material nature run up into the invisible world of the mind, and hereby we acquire a key to those sublimities which skulk and hide in the caverns of human consciousness. And in the impenetrable mystery which hides — and hides through absolute transparency — the mental nature, I await the insight which our advancing knowledge of material laws shall furnish.[1]

But the laws of force apply to every form of it. The husbandry learned in the economy of heat or light or steam or muscular fibre applies precisely to the use of wit. What I have said of the inexorable persistence of every elemental force to remain itself, the impossibility of tampering with it or warping it, — the same rule

applies again strictly to this force of intellect; that it is perception, a seeing, not making, thoughts. The man must bend to the law, never the law to him.

The brain of man has methods and arrangements corresponding to these material powers, by which he can use them. See how trivial is the use of the world by any other of its creatures. Whilst these forces act on us from the outside and we are not in their counsel, we call them Fate. The animal instincts guide the animal as gravity governs the stone, and in man that bias or direction of his constitution is often as tyrannical as gravity. We call it temperament, and it seems to be the remains of wolf, ape, and rattlesnake in him. While the reason is yet dormant, this rules; as the reflective faculties open, this subsides. We come to reason and knowledge; we see the causes of evils and learn to parry them and use them as instruments, by knowledge, being inside of them and dealing with them as the Creator does. It is curious to see how a creature so feeble and vulnerable as a man, who, unarmed, is no match for the wild beasts, tiger, or crocodile, none for the frost, none for the sea, none for a fog, or a damp air, or the feeble fork of a poor worm, —

each of a thousand petty accidents puts him to death every day, — is yet able to subdue to his will these terrific forces, and more than these. His whole frame is responsive to the world, part for part, every sense, every pore to a new element, so that he seems to have as many talents as there are qualities in Nature. No force but is his force. He does not possess them, he is a pipe through which their currents flow. If a straw be held still in the direction of the ocean-current, the sea will pour through it as through Gibraltar. If he should measure strength with them, if he should fight the sea and the whirlwind with his ship, he would snap his spars, tear his sails, and swamp his bark; but by cunningly dividing the force, tapping the tempest for a little side-wind, he uses the monsters, and they carry him where he would go. Look at him; you can give no guess at what power is in him. It never appears directly, but follow him and see his effects, see his productions. He is a planter, a miner, a shipbuilder, a machinist, a musician, a steam-engine, a geometer, an astronomer, a persuader of men, a lawgiver, a builder of towns; — and each of these by dint of a wonderful method or series that resides in him and enables him to work on the material elements.'

We are surrounded by human thought and labor. Where are the farmer's days gone? See, they are hid in that stone wall, in that excavated trench, in the harvest grown on what was shingle and pine-barren. He put his days into carting from the distant swamp the mountain of muck which has been trundled about until it now makes the cover of fruitful soil. Labor hides itself in every mode and form. It is massed and blocked away in that stone house, for five hundred years. It is twisted and screwed into fragrant hay which fills the barn. It surprises in the perfect form and condition of trees clean of caterpillars and borers, rightly pruned, and loaded with grafted fruit. It is under the house in the well; it is over the house in slates and copper and water-spout; it grows in the corn; it delights us in the flower-bed; it keeps the cow out of the garden, the rain out of the library, the miasma out of the town. It is in dress, in pictures, in ships, in cannon; in every spectacle, in odors, in flavors, in sweet sounds, in works of safety, of delight, of wrath, of science.

The thoughts, no man ever saw, but disorder becomes order where he goes; weakness becomes power; surprising and admirable effects

follow him like a creator. All forces are his; as the wise merchant by truth in his dealings finds his credit unlimited, — he can use in turn, as he wants it, all the property in the world, — so a man draws on all the air for his occasions, as if there were no other breather; on all the water as if there were no other sailor; he is warmed by the sun, and so of every element; he walks and works by the aid of gravitation; he draws on all knowledge as his province, on all beauty for his innocent delight, and first or last he exhausts by his use all the harvests, all the powers of the world. For man, the receiver of all, and depositary of these volumes of power, I am to say that his ability and performance are according to his reception of these various streams of force. We define Genius to be a sensibility to all the impressions of the outer world, a sensibility so equal that it receives accurately all impressions, and can truly report them, without excess or loss, as it received. It must not only receive all, but it must render all. And the health of man is an equality of inlet and outlet, gathering and giving. Any hoarding is tumor and disease.

If we were truly to take account of stock before the last Court of Appeals, — that were

an inventory! What are my resources? "Our stock in life, our real estate, is that amount of thought which we have had," — and which we have applied, and so domesticated. The ground we have thus created is forever a fund for new thoughts. A few moral maxims confirmed by much experience would stand high on the list, constituting a supreme prudence. Then the knowledge unutterable of our private strength, of where it lies, of its accesses and facilitations, and of its obstructions. My conviction of principles, — that is great part of my possessions. Certain thoughts, certain observations, long familiar to me in night-watches and daylights, would be my capital if I removed to Spain or China, or, by stranger translation, to the planet Jupiter or Mars, or to new spiritual societies. Every valuable person who joins in an enterprise, — is it a piece of industry, or the founding of a colony or a college, the reform of some public abuse, or some effort of patriotism, — what he chiefly brings, all he brings, is not his land or his money or body's strength, but his thoughts, his way of classifying and seeing things, his method. And thus with every one a new power. In proportion to the depth of the insight is the power and reach of the kingdom he controls.

It would be easy to awake wonder by sketching the performance of each of these mental forces; as of the diving-bell of the Memory, which descends into the deeps of our past and oldest experience and brings up every lost jewel; or of the Fancy, which sends its gay balloon aloft into the sky to catch every tint and gleam of romance; of the Imagination, which turns every dull fact into pictures and poetry, by making it an emblem of thought. What a power, when, combined with the analyzing understanding, it makes Eloquence; the art of compelling belief, the art of making peoples' hearts dance to his pipe! And not less, method, patience, self-trust, perseverance, love, desire of knowledge, the passion for truth. These are the angels that take us by the hand, these our immortal, invulnerable guardians. By their strength we are strong, and on the signal occasions in our career their inspirations flow to us and make the selfish and protected and tenderly bred person strong for his duty, wise in counsel, skilful in action, competent to rule, willing to obey.

I delight in tracing these wonderful powers, the electricity and gravity of the human world. The power of persistence, of enduring defeat and of gaining victory by defeats, is one of these

forces which never loses its charm.[1] The power of a man increases steadily by continuance in one direction. He becomes acquainted with the resistances, and with his own tools; increases his skill and strength and learns the favorable moments and favorable accidents. He is his own apprentice, and more time gives a great addition of power, just as a falling body acquires momentum with every foot of the fall. How we prize a good continuer! I knew a manufacturer who found his property invested in chemical works which were depreciating in value. He undertook the charge of them himself, began at the beginning, learned chemistry and acquainted himself with all the conditions of the manufacture. His friends dissuaded him, advised him to give up the work, which was not suited to the country. Why throw good money after bad? But he persisted, and after many years succeeded in his production of the right article for commerce, brought up the stock of his mills to par, and then sold out his interest, having accomplished the reform that was required.

In each the talent is the perception of an order and series in the department he deals with, — of an order and series which preëxisted in Nature, and which this mind sees and conforms to.

The geometer shows us the true order in figures; the painter in laws of color; the dancer in grace. Bonaparte, with his celerity of combination, mute, unfathomable, reads the geography of Europe as if his eyes were telescopes; his will is an immense battery discharging irresistible volleys of power always at the right point in the right time.

There was a story in the journals of a poor prisoner in a Western police-court who was told he might be released if he would pay his fine. He had no money, he had no friends, but he took his flute out of his pocket and began to play, to the surprise, and, as it proved, to the delight of all the company; the jurors waked up, the sheriff forgot his duty, the judge himself beat time, and the prisoner was by general consent of court and officers allowed to go his way without any money. And I suppose, if he could have played loud enough, we here should have beat time, and the whole population of the globe would beat time, and consent that he should go without his fine.[1]

I knew a stupid young farmer, churlish, living only for his gains, and with whom the only intercourse you could have was to buy what he had to sell. One day I found his little boy of

four years dragging about after him the prettiest little wooden cart, so neatly built, and with decorations too, and learned that Papa had made it; that hidden deep in that thick skull was this gentle art and taste which the little fingers and caresses of his son had the power to draw out into day; he was no peasant after all. So near to us is the flowering of Fine Art in the rudest population. See in a circle of school-girls one with no beauty, no special vivacity, — but she can so recite her adventures that she is never alone, but at night or at morning wherever she sits the inevitable circle gathers around her, willing prisoners of that wonderful memory and fancy and spirit of life. Would you know where to find her? Listen for the laughter, follow the cheerful hum, see where is the rapt attention, and a pretty crowd all bright with one electricity; there in the centre of fellowship and joy is Scheherazade again.

See how rich life is; rich in private talents, each of which charms us in turn and seems the best. If we hear music we give up all to that; if we fall in with a cricket-club and see the game masterly played, the best player is the first of men; if we go to the regatta, we forget the bowler for the stroke oar; and when the soldier

comes home from the fight, he fills all eyes. But the soldier has the same admiration of the great parliamentary debater. And poetry and literature are disdainful of all these claims beside their own. Like the boy who thought in turn each one of the four seasons the best, and each of the three hundred and sixty-five days in the year the crowner. The sensibility is all.[1]

Every one knows what are the effects of music to put people in gay or mournful or martial mood. But these are the effects on dull subjects, and only the hint of its power on a keener sense. It is a stroke on a loose or tense cord. The story of Orpheus, of Arion, of the Arabian minstrel, are not fables, but experiments on the same iron at white heat.

By this wondrous susceptibility to all the impressions of Nature the man finds himself the receptacle of celestial thoughts, of happy relations to all men. The imagination enriches him, as if there were no other; the memory opens all her cabinets and archives; Science her length and breadth; Poetry her splendor and joy and the august circles of eternal law. These are means and stairs for new ascensions of the mind. But they are nowise impoverished for any other mind, not tarnished, not breathed upon; for the

mighty Intellect did not stoop to him and become property, but he rose to it and followed its circuits. "It is ours while we use it, it is not ours when we do not use it."

And so, one step higher, when he comes into the realm of sentiment and will. He sees the grandeur of justice, the victory of love, the eternity that belongs to all moral nature. He does not then invent his sentiment or his act, but obeys a preëxisting right which he sees. We arrive at virtue by taking its direction instead of imposing ours.[1]

The last revelation of intellect and of sentiment is that in a manner it severs the man from all other men; makes known to him that the spiritual powers are sufficient to him if no other being existed; that he is to deal absolutely in the world, as if he alone were a system and a state, and though all should perish could make all anew.

The forces are infinite. Every one has the might of all, for the secret of the world is that its energies are *solidaires;* that they work together on a system of mutual aid, all for each and each for all; that the strain made on one point bears on every arch and foundation of the structure. But if you wish to avail yourself

of their might, and in like manner if you wish the force of the intellect, the force of the will, you must take their divine direction, not they yours. Obedience alone gives the right to command.' It is like the village operator who taps the telegraph-wire and surprises the secrets of empires as they pass to the capital. So this child of the dust throws himself by obedience into the circuit of the heavenly wisdom, and shares the secret of God.

Thus is the world delivered into your hand, but on two conditions, — not for property, but for use, use according to the noble nature of the gifts; and not for toys, not for self-indulgence. Things work to their ends, not to yours, and will certainly defeat any adventurer who fights against this ordination.

The effort of men is to use them for private ends. They wish to pocket land and water and fire and air and all fruits of these, for property, and would like to have Aladdin's lamp to compel darkness, and iron-bound doors, and hostile armies, and lions and serpents to serve them like footmen. And they wish the same service from the spiritual faculties. A man has a rare mathematical talent, inviting him to the beautiful secrets of geometry, and wishes to clap a patent

on it; or has the fancy and invention of a poet, and says, 'I will write a play that shall be repeated in London a hundred nights;' or a military genius, and instead of using that to defend his country, he says, 'I will fight the battle so as to give me place and political consideration;' or Canning or Thurlow has a genius of debate, and says, 'I will know how with this weapon to defend the cause that will pay best and make me Chancellor or Foreign Secretary.' But this perversion is punished with instant loss of true wisdom and real power

I find the survey of these cosmical powers a doctrine of consolation in the dark hours of private or public fortune. It shows us the world alive, guided, incorruptible; that its cannon cannot be stolen nor its virtues misapplied. It shows us the long Providence, the safeguards of rectitude. It animates exertion; it warns us out of that despair into which Saxon men are prone to fall, — out of an idolatry of forms, instead of working to simple ends, in the belief that Heaven always succors us in working for these. This world belongs to the energetical. It is a fagot of laws, and a true analysis of these laws, showing how immortal and how self-protecting they are, would be a wholesome lesson

for every time and for this time. That band which ties them together is unity, is universal good, saturating all with one being and aim, so that each translates the other, is only the same spirit applied to new departments. Things are saturated with the moral law. There is no escape from it. Violets and grass preach it; rain and snow, wind and tides, every change, every cause in Nature is nothing but a disguised missionary.[1]

All our political disasters grow as logically out of our attempts in the past to do without justice, as the sinking of some part of your house comes of defect in the foundation. One thing is plain; a certain personal virtue is essential to freedom; and it begins to be doubtful whether our corruption in this country has not gone a little over the mark of safety, so that when canvassed we shall be found to be made up of a majority of reckless self-seekers. The divine knowledge has ebbed out of us and we do not know enough to be free.[2]

I hope better of the State. Half a man's wisdom goes with his courage. A boy who knows that a bully lives round the corner which he must pass on his daily way to school, is apt to take sinister views of streets and of school education. And a sensitive politician suffers his ideas of the

part New York or Pennsylvania or Ohio is to play in the future of the Union, to be fashioned by the election of rogues in some counties. But we must not gratify the rogues so deeply. There is a speedy limit to profligate politics.

Fear disenchants life and the world. If I have not my own respect I am an impostor, not entitled to other men's, and had better creep into my grave. I admire the sentiment of Thoreau, who said, "Nothing is so much to be feared as fear; God himself likes atheism better." For the world is a battle-ground; every principle is a war-note, and the most quiet and protected life is at any moment exposed to incidents which test your firmness. The illusion that strikes me as the masterpiece in that ring of illusions which our life is, is the timidity with which we assert our moral sentiment. We are made of it, the world is built by it, things endure as they share it; all beauty, all health, all intelligence exist by it; yet we shrink to speak of it or to range ourselves by its side. Nay, we presume strength of him or them who deny it. Cities go against it; the college goes against it, the courts snatch at any precedent, at any vicious form of law to rule it out; legislatures listen with appetite to declamations against it, and vote it down. Every

new asserter of the right surprises us, like a man joining the church, and we hardly dare believe he is in earnest.[1]

What we do and suffer is in moments, but the cause of right for which we labor never dies, works in long periods, can afford many checks, gains by our defeats, and will know how to compensate our extremest sacrifice. Wrath and petulance may have their short success, but they quickly reach their brief date and decompose, whilst the massive might of ideas is irresistible at last. Whence does the knowledge come? Where is the source of power? The soul of God is poured into the world through the thoughts of men. The world stands on ideas, and not on iron or cotton; and the iron of iron, the fire of fire, the ether and source of all the elements is moral force. As cloud on cloud, as snow on snow, as the bird on the air, and the planet on space in its flight, so do nations of men and their institutions rest on thoughts.[2]

IV

CHARACTER

Shun passion, fold the hands of thrift,
Sit still, and Truth is near;
Suddenly it will uplift
Your eyelids to the sphere:
Wait a little, you shall see
The portraiture of things to be.

For what need I of book or priest
Or Sibyl from the mummied East
When every star is Bethlehem Star,
I count as many as there are
Cinquefoils or violets in the grass,
So many saints and saviours,
So many high behaviours.

CHARACTER

MORALS respects what men call goodness, that which all men agree to honor as justice, truth-speaking, good will and good works. Morals respects the source or motive of this action. It is the science of substances, not of shows. It is the *what*, and not the *how*. It is that which all men profess to regard, and by their real respect for which recommend themselves to each other.

There is this eternal advantage to morals, that, in the question between truth and goodness, the moral cause of the world lies behind all else in the mind. It was for good, it is to good, that all works. Surely it is not to prove or show the truth of things, — that sounds a little cold and scholastic, — no, it is for benefit, that all subsists. As we say in our modern politics, catching at last the language of morals, that the object of the State is the greatest good of the greatest number, — so, the reason we must give for the existence of the world is, that it is for the benefit of all being.

Morals implies freedom and will. The will constitutes the man. He has his life in Nature,

like a beast: but choice is born in him; here is he that chooses; here is the Declaration of Independence, the July Fourth of zoölogy and astronomy. He chooses, — as the rest of the creation does not. But will, pure and perceiving, is not wilfulness. When a man, through stubbornness, insists to do this or that, something absurd or whimsical, only because he will, he is weak; he blows with his lips against the tempest, he dams the incoming ocean with his cane. It were an unspeakable calamity if any one should think he had the right to impose a private will on others. That is the part of a striker, an assassin. All violence, all that is dreary and repels, is not power but the absence of power.

Morals is the direction of the will on universal ends. He is immoral who is acting to any private end. He is moral, — we say it with Marcus Aurelius and with Kant, — whose aim or motive may become a universal rule, binding on all intelligent beings; and with Vauvenargues, "the mercenary sacrifice of the public good to a private interest is the eternal stamp of vice."

All the virtues are special directions of this motive; justice is the application of this good of the whole to the affairs of each one; courage

is contempt of danger in the determination to see this good of the whole enacted; love is delight in the preference of that benefit redounding to another over the securing of our own share; humility is a sentiment of our insignificance when the benefit of the universe is considered.

If from these external statements we seek to come a little nearer to the fact, our first experiences in moral, as in intellectual nature, force us to discriminate a universal mind, identical in all men. Certain biases, talents, executive skills, are special to each individual; but the high, contemplative, all-commanding vision, the sense of Right and Wrong, is alike in all. Its attributes are self-existence, eternity, intuition and command. It is the mind of the mind. We belong to it, not it to us. It is in all men, and constitutes them men. In bad men it is dormant, as health is in men entranced or drunken; but, however inoperative, it exists underneath whatever vices and errors. The extreme simplicity of this intuition embarrasses every attempt at analysis. We can only mark, one by one, the perfections which it combines in every act. It admits of no appeal, looks to no superior essence. It is the reason of things.

The antagonist nature is the individual, formed into a finite body of exact dimensions, with appetites which take from everybody else what they appropriate to themselves, and would enlist the entire spiritual faculty of the individual, if it were possible, in catering for them. On the perpetual conflict between the dictate of this universal mind and the wishes and interests of the individual, the moral discipline of life is built. The one craves a private benefit, which the other requires him to renounce out of respect to the absolute good. Every hour puts the individual in a position where his wishes aim at something which the sentiment of duty forbids him to seek. He that speaks the truth executes no private function of an individual will, but the world utters a sound by his lips. He who doth a just action seeth therein nothing of his own, but an inconceivable nobleness attaches to it, because it is a dictate of the general mind. We have no idea of power so simple and so entire as this. It is the basis of thought, it is the basis of being. Compare all that we call ourselves, all our private and personal venture in the world, with this deep of moral nature in which we lie, and our private good becomes an impertinence, and we take part with hasty shame against ourselves : —

"High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised, —
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet the master-light of all our seeing, —
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence, — truths that wake
To perish never." [1]

The moral element invites man to great enlargements, to find his satisfaction, not in particulars or events, but in the purpose and tendency; not in bread, but in his right to his bread; not in much corn or wool, but in its communication.

Not by adding, then, does the moral sentiment help us; no, but in quite another manner. It puts us in place. It centres, it concentrates us. It puts us at the heart of Nature, where we belong, in the cabinet of science and of causes, there where all the wires terminate which hold the world in magnetic unity, and so converts us into universal beings.

This wonderful sentiment, which endears itself as it is obeyed, seems to be the fountain of intellect; for no talent gives the impression of sanity, if wanting this; nay, it absorbs everything into itself. Truth, Power, Goodness,

Beauty, are its varied names, — faces of one substance, the heart of all. Before it, what are persons, prophets, or seraphim but its passing agents, momentary rays of its light? [1]

The moral sentiment is alone omnipotent. There is no labor or sacrifice to which it will not bring a man, and which it will not make easy. Thus there is no man who will bargain to sell his life, say at the end of a year, for a million or ten millions of gold dollars in hand, or for any temporary pleasures, or for any rank, as of peer or prince; but many a man who does not hesitate to lay down his life for the sake of a truth, or in the cause of his country, or to save his son or his friend. And under the action of this sentiment of the Right, his heart and mind expand above himself, and above Nature.

> Though Love repine, and Reason chafe,
> There came a voice without reply,
> "'T is man's perdition to be safe,
> When for the truth he ought to die." [2]

Such is the difference of the action of the heart within and of the senses without. One is enthusiasm, and the other more or less amounts of horse-power.

Devout men, in the endeavor to express their convictions, have used different images to sug-

gest this latent force; as, the light, the seed, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Dæmon, the still, small voice, etc., — all indicating its power and its latency. It is serenely above all mediation. In all ages, to all men, it saith, *I am;* and he who hears it feels the impiety of wandering from this revelation to any record or to any rival. The poor Jews of the wilderness cried: "Let not the Lord speak to us; let Moses speak to us." But the simple and sincere soul makes the contrary prayer: 'Let no intruder come between thee and me; deal THOU with me; let me know it is thy will, and I ask no more.' The excellence of Jesus, and of every true teacher, is, that he affirms the Divinity in him and in us, — not thrusts himself between it and us. It would instantly indispose us to any person claiming to speak for the Author of Nature, the setting forth any fact or law which we did not find in our consciousness. We should say with Heraclitus: "Come into this smoky cabin; God is here also: approve yourself to him." [1]

We affirm that in all men is this majestic perception and command; that it is the presence of the Eternal in each perishing man; that it distances and degrades all statements of what-

ever saints, heroes, poets, as obscure and confused stammerings before its silent revelation. *They* report the truth. *It* is the truth. When I think of Reason, of Truth, of Virtue, I cannot conceive them as lodged in your soul and lodged in my soul, but that you and I and all souls are lodged in that; and I may easily speak of that adorable nature, there where only I behold it in my dim experiences, in such terms as shall seem to the frivolous, who dare not fathom their consciousness, as profane.[1] How is a man a man? How can he exist to weave relations of joy and virtue with other souls, but because he is inviolable, anchored at the centre of Truth and Being? In the ever-returning hour of reflection, he says: 'I stand here glad at heart of all the sympathies I can awaken and share, clothing myself with them as with a garment of shelter and beauty, and yet knowing that it is not in the power of all who surround me to take from me the smallest thread I call mine. If all things are taken away, I have still all things in my relation to the Eternal.'

We pretend not to define the way of its access to the private heart. It passes understanding. There was a time when Christianity existed in one child. But if the child had been killed by

Herod, would the element have been lost? God sends his message, if not by one, then quite as well by another. When the Master of the Universe has ends to fulfil, he impresses his will on the structure of minds.

The Divine Mind imparts itself to the single person: his whole duty is to this rule and teaching. The aid which others give us is like that of the mother to the child, — temporary, gestative, a short period of lactation, a nurse's or a governess's care; but on his arrival at a certain maturity, it ceases, and would be hurtful and ridiculous if prolonged. Slowly the body comes to the use of its organs; slowly the soul unfolds itself in the new man. It is partial at first, and honors only some one or some few truths. In its companions it sees other truths honored, and successively finds their foundation also in itself. Then it cuts the cord, and no longer believes "because of thy saying," but because it has recognized them in itself.[1]

The Divine Mind imparts itself to the single person: but it is also true that men act powerfully on us. There are men who astonish and delight, men who instruct and guide. Some men's words I remember so well that I must often use them to express my thought. Yes,

because I perceive that we have heard the same truth, but they have heard it better. That is only to say, there is degree and gradation throughout Nature; and the Deity does not break his firm laws in respect to imparting truth, more than in imparting material heat and light. Men appear from time to time who receive with more purity and fulness these high communications. But it is only as fast as this hearing from another is authorized by its consent with his own, that it is pure and safe to each; and all receiving from abroad must be controlled by this immense reservation.[1]

It happens now and then, in the ages, that a soul is born which has no weakness of self, which offers no impediment to the Divine Spirit, which comes down into Nature as if only for the benefit of souls, and all its thoughts are perceptions of things as they are, without any infirmity of earth. Such souls are as the apparition of gods among men, and simply by their presence pass judgment on them. Men are forced by their own self-respect to give them a certain attention. Evil men shrink and pay involuntary homage by hiding or apologizing for their action.

When a man is born with a profound moral sentiment, preferring truth, justice and the serv-

ing of all men to any honors or any gain, men readily feel the superiority. They who deal with him are elevated with joy and hope; he lights up the house or the landscape in which he stands. His actions are poetic and miraculous in their eyes. In his presence, or within his influence, every one believes in the immortality of the soul. They feel that the invisible world sympathizes with him. The Arabians delight in expressing the sympathy of the unseen world with holy men.

> When Omar prayed and loved,
> Where Syrian waters roll,
> Aloft the ninth heaven glowed and moved
> To the tread of the jubilant soul.[1]

A chief event of life is the day in which we have encountered a mind that startled us by its large scope. I am in the habit of thinking — not, I hope, out of a partial experience, but confirmed by what I notice in many lives — that to every serious mind Providence sends from time to time five or six or seven teachers who are of the first importance to him in the lessons they have to impart. The highest of these not so much give particular knowledge, as they elevate by sentiment and by their habitual grandeur of view.[2]

Great men serve us as insurrections do in bad governments. The world would run into endless routine, and forms incrust forms, till the life was gone. But the perpetual supply of new genius shocks us with thrills of life, and recalls us to principles. Lucifer's wager in the old drama was, "There is no steadfast man on earth." He is very rare. "A man is already of consequence in the world when it is known that we can implicitly rely on him." See how one noble person dwarfs a whole nation of underlings. This steadfastness we indicate when we praise character.

Character denotes habitual self-possession, habitual regard to interior and constitutional motives, a balance not to be overset or easily disturbed by outward events and opinion, and by implication points to the source of right motive.[1] We sometimes employ the word to express the strong and consistent will of men of mixed motive, but, when used with emphasis, it points to what no events can change, that is, a will built on the reason of things. Such souls do not come in troops: oftenest appear solitary, like a general without his command, because those who can understand and uphold such appear rarely, not many, perhaps not one, in a

generation. And the memory and tradition of such a leader is preserved in some strange way by those who only half understand him, until a true disciple comes, who apprehends and interprets every word.

The sentiment never stops in pure vision, but will be enacted. It affirms not only its truth, but its supremacy. It is not only insight, as science, as fancy, as imagination is; or an entertainment, as friendship and poetry are; but it is a sovereign rule: and the acts which it suggests —as when it impels a man to go forth and impart it to other men, or sets him on some asceticism or some practice of self-examination to hold him to obedience, or some zeal to unite men to abate some nuisance, or establish some reform or charity which it commands — are the homage we render to this sentiment, as compared with the lower regard we pay to other thoughts: and the private or social practices we establish in its honor we call religion.

The sentiment, of course, is the judge and measure of every expression of it, — measures Judaism, Stoicism, Christianity, Buddhism, or whatever philanthropy, or politics, or saint, or seer pretends to speak in its name. The religions we call false were once true. They also were

affirmations of the conscience correcting the evil customs of their times. The populace drag down the gods to their own level, and give them their egotism; whilst in Nature is none at all, God keeping out of sight, and known only as pure law, though resistless. Châteaubriand said, with some irreverence of phrase, If God made man in his image, man has paid him well back. "*Si Dieu a fait l'homme à son image, l'homme l'a bien rendu.*" Every nation is degraded by the goblins it worships instead of this Deity. The Dionysia and Saturnalia of Greece and Rome, the human sacrifice of the Druids, the Sradda of Hindoos, the Purgatory, the Indulgences, and the Inquisition of Popery, the vindictive mythology of Calvinism, are examples of this perversion.

Every particular instruction is speedily embodied in a ritual, is accommodated to humble and gross minds, and corrupted. The moral sentiment is the perpetual critic on these forms, thundering its protest, sometimes in earnest and lofty rebuke; but sometimes also it is the source, in natures less pure, of sneers and flippant jokes of common people, who feel that the forms and dogmas are not true for them, though they do not see where the error lies.[1]

The religion of one age is the literary entertainment of the next. We use in our idlest poetry and discourse the words Jove, Neptune, Mercury, as mere colors, and can hardly believe that they had to the lively Greek the anxious meaning which, in our towns, is given and received in churches when our religious names are used: and we read with surprise the horror of Athens when, one morning, the statues of Mercury in the temples were found broken, and the like consternation was in the city as if, in Boston, all the Orthodox churches should be burned in one night.

The greatest dominion will be to the deepest thought. The establishment of Christianity in the world does not rest on any miracle but the miracle of being the broadest and most humane doctrine. Christianity was once a schism and protest against the impieties of the time, which had originally been protests against earlier impieties, but had lost their truth. Varnhagen von Ense, writing in Prussia in 1848, says: "The Gospels belong to the most aggressive writings. No leaf thereof could attain the liberty of being printed (in Berlin) to-day. What Mirabeaus, Rousseaus, Diderots, Fichtes, Heines, and many another heretic, one can detect therein!"

But before it was yet a national religion it was alloyed, and, in the hands of hot Africans, of luxurious Byzantines, of fierce Gauls, its creeds were tainted with their barbarism. In Holland, in England, in Scotland, it felt the national narrowness. How unlike our habitual turn of thought was that of the last century in this country! Our ancestors spoke continually of angels and archangels with the same good faith as they would have spoken of their own parents or their late minister. Now the words pale, are rhetoric, and all credence is gone.[1] Our horizon is not far, say one generation, or thirty years: we all see so much. The older see two generations, or sixty years. But what has been running on through three horizons, or ninety years, looks to all the world like a law of Nature, and 't is an impiety to doubt. Thus, 't is incredible to us, if we look into the religious books of our grandfathers, how they held themselves in such a pinfold. But why not? As far as they could see, through two or three horizons, nothing but ministers and ministers. Calvinism was one and the same thing in Geneva, in Scotland, in Old and New England. If there was a wedding, they had a sermon; if a funeral, then a sermon; if a war, or small-pox, or a comet, or canker-worms,

or a deacon died, — still a sermon: Nature was a pulpit;[1] the church-warden or tithing-man was a petty persecutor; the presbytery, a tyrant; and in many a house in country places the poor children found seven sabbaths in a week. Fifty or a hundred years ago, prayers were said, morning and evening, in all families; grace was said at table; an exact observance of the Sunday was kept in the houses of laymen as of clergymen. And one sees with some pain the disuse of rites so charged with humanity and aspiration. But it by no means follows, because those offices are much disused, that the men and women are irreligious; certainly not that they have less integrity or sentiment, but only, let us hope, that they see that they can omit the form without loss of real ground; perhaps that they find some violence, some cramping of their freedom of thought, in the constant recurrence of the form.

So of the changed position and manners of the clergy. They have dropped, with the sacerdotal garb and manners of the last century, many doctrines and practices once esteemed indispensable to their order. But the distinctions of the true clergyman are not less decisive. Men ask now, "Is he serious? Is he a sincere man, who lives as he teaches? Is he a benefactor?" So

far the religion is now where it should be. Persons are discriminated as honest, as veracious, as illuminated, as helpful, as having public and universal regards, or otherwise; — are discriminated according to their aims, and not by these ritualities.

The changes are inevitable; the new age cannot see with the eyes of the last. But the change is in what is superficial; the principles are immortal, and the rally on the principle must arrive as people become intellectual. I consider theology to be the rhetoric of morals. The mind of this age has fallen away from theology to morals. I conceive it an advance. I suspect, that, when the theology was most florid and dogmatic, it was the barbarism of the people, and that, in that very time, the best men also fell away from theology, and rested in morals. I think that all the dogmas rest on morals, and that it is only a question of youth or maturity, of more or less fancy in the recipient; that the stern determination to do justly, to speak the truth, to be chaste and humble, was substantially the same, whether under a self-respect, or under a vow made on the knees at the shrine of Madonna.

When once Selden had said that the priests

seemed to him to be baptizing their own fingers, the rite of baptism was getting late in the world. Or when once it is perceived that the English missionaries in India put obstacles in the way of schools (as is alleged), — do not wish to enlighten but to Christianize the Hindoos, — it is seen at once how wide of Christ is English Christianity.

Mankind at large always resemble frivolous children: they are impatient of thought, and wish to be amused. Truth is too simple for us; we do not like those who unmask our illusions. Fontenelle said: "If the Deity should lay bare to the eyes of men the secret system of Nature, the causes by which all the astronomic results are affected, and they finding no magic, no mystic numbers, no fatalities, but the greatest simplicity, I am persuaded they would not be able to suppress a feeling of mortification, and would exclaim, with disappointment, 'Is that all?'" And so we paint over the bareness of ethics with the quaint grotesques of theology.

We boast the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, meaning the victory of the spirit over the senses; but Paganism hides itself in the uniform of the Church. Paganism has only taken the oath of allegiance, taken the cross,

but is Paganism still, outvotes the true men by millions of majority, carries the bag, spends the treasure, writes the tracts, elects the minister, and persecutes the true believer.

There is a certain secular progress of opinion, which, in civil countries, reaches everybody. One service which this age has rendered is, to make the life and wisdom of every past man accessible and available to all. Socrates and Marcus Aurelius are allowed to be saints; Mahomet is no longer accursed; Voltaire is no longer a scarecrow; Spinoza has come to be revered.[1] "The time will come," says Varnhagen von Ense, "when we shall treat the jokes and sallies against the myths and church-rituals of Christianity — say the sarcasms of Voltaire, Frederic the Great, and D'Alembert — good-naturedly and without offence: since, at bottom, those men mean honestly, their polemics proceed out of a religious striving, and what Christ meant and willed is in essence more with them than with their opponents, who only wear and misrepresent the *name* of Christ. . . . Voltaire was an apostle of Christian ideas; only the names were hostile to him, and he never knew it otherwise. He was like the son of the vine-dresser in the Gospel, who said No, and went; the other said Yea,

and went not. These men preached the true God, — Him whom men serve by justice and uprightness; but they called themselves atheists." [1]

When the highest conceptions, the lessons of religion, are imported, the nation is not culminating, has not genius, but is servile. A true nation loves its vernacular tongue. A completed nation will not import its religion. Duty grows everywhere, like children, like grass; and we need not go to Europe or to Asia to learn it.[2] I am not sure that the English religion is not all quoted. Even the Jeremy Taylors, Fullers, George Herberts, steeped, all of them, in Church traditions, are only using their fine fancy to emblazon their memory. 'T is Judæa, not England, which is the ground. So with the mordant Calvinism of Scotland and America. But this quoting distances and disables them: since with every repeater something of creative force is lost, as we feel when we go back to each original moralist. Pythagoras, Socrates, the Stoics, the Hindoo, Behmen, George Fox, — these speak originally; and how many sentences and books we owe to unknown authors, — to writers who were not careful to set down name or date or titles or cities or postmarks in these illuminations!

We, in our turn, want power to drive the

ponderous State. The constitution and law in America must be written on ethical principles, so that the entire power of the spiritual world can be enlisted to hold the loyalty of the citizen, and to repel every enemy as by force of Nature. The laws of old empires stood on the religious convictions. Now that their religions are outgrown, the empires lack strength. Romanism in Europe does not represent the real opinion of enlightened men. The Lutheran Church does not represent in Germany the opinions of the universities. In England, the gentlemen, the journals, and now, at last, churchmen and bishops, have fallen away from the Anglican Church. And in America, where are no legal ties to churches, the looseness appears dangerous.

Our religion has got on as far as Unitarianism. But all the forms grow pale. The walls of the temple are wasted and thin, and, at last, only a film of whitewash, because the mind of our culture has already left our liturgies behind. "Every age," says Varnhagen, "has another sieve for the religious tradition, and will sift it out again. Something is continually lost by this treatment, which posterity cannot recover."

But it is a capital truth that Nature, moral as well as material, is always equal to herself. Ideas

always generate enthusiasm. The creed, the legend, forms of worship, swiftly decay. Morals is the incorruptible essence, very heedless in its richness of any past teacher or witness, heedless of their lives and fortunes. It does not ask whether you are wrong or right in your anecdotes of them; but it is all in all how you stand to your own tribunal.

The lines of the religious sects are very shifting; their platforms unstable; the whole science of theology of great uncertainty, and resting very much on the opinions of who may chance to be the leading doctors of Oxford or Edinburgh, of Princeton or Cambridge, to-day. No man can tell what religious revolutions await us in the next years; and the education in the divinity colleges may well hesitate and vary. But the science of ethics has no mutation; ' and whoever feels any love or skill for ethical studies may safely lay out all his strength and genius in working in that mine. The pulpit may shake, but this platform will not. All the victories of religion belong to the moral sentiment. Some poor soul beheld the Law blazing through such impediments as he had, and yielded himself to humility and joy. What was gained by being told that it was justification by faith?

The Church, in its ardor for beloved persons, clings to the miraculous, in the vulgar sense, which has even an immoral tendency, as one sees in Greek, Indian and Catholic legends, which are used to gloze every crime. The soul, penetrated with the beatitude which pours into it on all sides, asks no interpositions, no new laws, — the old are good enough for it, — finds in every cart-path of labor ways to heaven, and the humblest lot exalted. Men will learn to put back the emphasis peremptorily on pure morals, always the same, not subject to doubtful interpretation, with no sale of indulgences, no massacre of heretics, no female slaves, no disfranchisement of woman, no stigma on race; to make morals the absolute test, and so uncover and drive out the false religions. There is no vice that has not skulked behind them. It is only yesterday that our American churches, so long silent on Slavery, and notoriously hostile to the Abolitionist, wheeled into line for Emancipation.

I am far from accepting the opinion that the revelations of the moral sentiment are insufficient, as if it furnished a rule only, and not the spirit by which the rule is animated. For I include in these, of course, the history of Jesus, as well as those of every divine soul which in

any place or time delivered any grand lesson to humanity; and I find in the eminent experiences in all times a substantial agreement. The sentiment itself teaches unity of source, and disowns every superiority other than of deeper truth. Jesus has immense claims on the gratitude of mankind, and knew how to guard the integrity of his brother's soul from himself also; but, in his disciples, admiration of him runs away with their reverence for the human soul, and they hamper us with limitations of person and text. Every exaggeration of these is a violation of the soul's right, and inclines the manly reader to lay down the New Testament, to take up the Pagan philosophers.[1] It is not that the Upanishads or the Maxims of Antoninus are better, but that they do not invade his freedom; because they are only suggestions, whilst the other adds the inadmissible claim of positive authority,—of an external command, where command cannot be. This is the secret of the mischievous result that, in every period of intellectual expansion, the Church ceases to draw into its clergy those who best belong there, the largest and freest minds, and that in its most liberal forms, when such minds enter it, they are coldly received, and find themselves out of place. This charm in the

Pagan moralists, of suggestion, the charm of poetry, of mere truth (easily disengaged from their historical accidents which nobody wishes to force on us), the New Testament loses by its connection with a church. Mankind cannot long suffer this loss, and the office of this age is to put all these writings on the eternal footing of equality of origin in the instincts of the human mind. It is certain that each inspired master will gain instantly by the separation from the idolatry of ages.

To their great honor, the simple and free minds among our clergy have not resisted the voice of Nature and the advanced perceptions of the mind; and every church divides itself into a liberal and expectant class, on one side, and an unwilling and conservative class on the other. As it stands with us now, a few clergymen, with a more theological cast of mind, retain the traditions, but they carry them quietly. In general discourse, they are never obtruded.[1] If the clergyman should travel in France, in England, in Italy, he might leave them locked up in the same closet with his "occasional sermons" at home, and, if he did not return, would never think to send for them. The orthodox clergymen hold a little firmer to theirs, as Calvinism

has a more tenacious vitality; but that is doomed also, and will only die last; for Calvinism rushes to be Unitarianism, as Unitarianism rushes to be pure Theism.

But the inspirations are never withdrawn. In the worst times, men of organic virtue are born, —men and women of native integrity, and indifferently in high and low conditions. There will always be a class of imaginative youths, whom poetry, whom the love of beauty, lead to the adoration of the moral sentiment, and these will provide it with new historic forms and songs. Religion is as inexpugnable as the use of lamps, or of wells, or of chimneys. We must have days and temples and teachers. The Sunday is the core of our civilization, dedicated to thought and reverence. It invites to the noblest solitude and the noblest society, to whatever means and aids of spiritual refreshment. Men may well come together to kindle each other to virtuous living. Confucius said, "If in the morning I hear of the right way, and in the evening die, I can be happy." [1]

The churches already indicate the new spirit in adding to the perennial office of teaching, beneficent activities, — as in creating hospitals, ragged schools, offices of employment for the

poor, appointing almoners to the helpless, guardians of foundlings and orphans. The power that in other times inspired crusades, or the colonization of New England, or the modern revivals, flies to the help of the deaf-mute and the blind, to the education of the sailor and the vagabond boy, to the reform of convicts and harlots, — as the war created the Hilton Head and Charleston missions, the Sanitary Commission, the nurses and teachers at Washington.

In the present tendency of our society, in the new importance of the individual, when thrones are crumbling and presidents and governors are forced every moment to remember their constituencies; when counties and towns are resisting centralization, and the individual voter his party,— society is threatened with actual granulation, religious as well as political. How many people are there in Boston? Some two hundred thousand. Well, then so many sects. Of course each poor soul loses all his old stays; no bishop watches him, no confessor reports that he has neglected the confessional, no class-leader admonishes him of absences, no fagot, no penance, no fine, no rebuke. Is not this wrong? is not this dangerous? 'T is not wrong, but the law

of growth. It is not dangerous, any more than the mother's withdrawing her hands from the tottering babe, at his first walk across the nursery-floor : the child fears and cries, but achieves the feat, instantly tries it again, and never wishes to be assisted more. And this infant soul must learn to walk alone. At first he is forlorn, homeless ; but this rude stripping him of all support drives him inward, and he finds himself unhurt ; he finds himself face to face with the majestic Presence, reads the original of the Ten Commandments, the original of Gospels and Epistles ; nay, his narrow chapel expands to the blue cathedral of the sky, where he

> "Looks in and sees each blissful deity,
> Where he before the thunderous throne doth lie." [1]

To nations or to individuals the progress of opinion is not a loss of moral restraint, but simply a change from coarser to finer checks. No evil can come from reform which a deeper thought will not correct. If there is any tendency in national expansion to form character, religion will not be a loser. There is a fear that pure truth, pure morals, will not make a religion for the affections. Whenever the sublimities of character shall be incarnated in a man, we may rely that awe and love and insatiable curiosity will

follow his steps. Character is the habit of action from the permanent vision of truth. It carries a superiority to all the accidents of life. It compels right relation to every other man, — domesticates itself with strangers and enemies. "But I, father," says the wise Prahlada, in the Vishnu Purana, "know neither friends nor foes, for I behold Kesava in all beings as in my own soul." It confers perpetual insight. It sees that a man's friends and his foes are of his own household, of his own person. What would it avail me, if I could destroy my enemies? There would be as many to-morrow. That which I hate and fear is really in myself, and no knife is long enough to reach to its heart. Confucius said one day to Ke Kang: "Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it." Ke Kang, distressed about the number of thieves in the state, inquired of Confucius how to do away with them. Confucius said, "If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal."

Its methods are subtle, it works without means. It indulges no enmity against any,

knowing, with Prahlada that "the suppression of malignant feeling is itself a reward." The more reason, the less government. In a sensible family, nobody ever hears the words "shall" and "shan't;" nobody commands, and nobody obeys, but all conspire and joyfully cöoperate. Take off the roofs of hundreds of happy houses, and you shall see this order without ruler, and the like in every intelligent and moral society. Command is exceptional, and marks some break in the link of reason; as the electricity goes round the world without a spark or a sound, until there is a break in the wire or the water chain. Swedenborg said, that, "in the spiritual world, when one wishes to rule, or despises others, he is thrust out of doors." Goethe, in discussing the characters in Wilhelm Meister, maintained his belief that "pure loveliness and right good will are the highest manly prerogatives, before which all energetic heroism, with its lustre and renown, must recede." In perfect accord with this, Henry James affirms, that "to give the feminine element in life its hard-earned but eternal supremacy over the masculine has been the secret inspiration of all past history."

There is no end to the sufficiency of character. It can afford to wait; it can do without what is

called success; it cannot but succeed. To a well-principled man existence is victory. He defends himself against failure in his main design by making every inch of the road to it pleasant. There is no trifle, and no obscurity to him: he feels the immensity of the chain whose last link he holds in his hand, and is led by it. Having nothing, this spirit hath all. It asks, with Marcus Aurelius, "What matter by whom the good is done?" It extols humility, — by every self-abasement lifted higher in the scale of being. It makes no stipulations for earthly felicity, — does not ask, in the absoluteness of its trust, even for the assurance of continued life.[1]

V

EDUCATION

With the key of the secret he marches faster
From strength to strength, and for night brings day
While classes or tribes too weak to master
The flowing conditions of life, give way.

EDUCATION

A NEW degree of intellectual power seems cheap at any price. The use of the world is that man may learn its laws. And the human race have wisely signified their sense of this, by calling wealth, means, — Man being the end. Language is always wise.

Therefore I praise New England because it is the country in the world where is the freest expenditure for education. We have already taken, at the planting of the Colonies (for aught I know for the first time in the world), the initial step, which for its importance might have been resisted as the most radical of revolutions, thus deciding at the start the destiny of this country, — this, namely, that the poor man, whom the law does not allow to take an ear of corn when starving, nor a pair of shoes for his freezing feet, is allowed to put his hand into the pocket of the rich, and say, You shall educate me, not as you will, but as I will: not alone in the elements, but, by further provision, in the languages, in sciences, in the useful and in elegant arts. The child shall be taken up by the State, and taught, at the public cost, the rudi-

ments of knowledge, and at last, the ripest results of art and science.'

Humanly speaking, the school, the college, society, make the difference between men. All the fairy tales of Aladdin or the invisible Gyges or the talisman that opens kings' palaces or the enchanted halls underground or in the sea, are only fictions to indicate the one miracle of intellectual enlargement. When a man stupid becomes a man inspired, when one and the same man passes out of the torpid into the perceiving state, leaves the din of trifles, the stupor of the senses, to enter into the quasi-omniscience of high thought, — up and down, around, all limits disappear. No horizon shuts down. He sees things in their causes, all facts in their connection.

One of the problems of history is the beginning of civilization. The animals that accompany and serve man make no progress as races. Those called domestic are capable of learning of man a few tricks of utility or amusement, but they cannot communicate the skill to their race. Each individual must be taught anew. The trained dog cannot train another dog. And Man himself in many races retains almost the unteachableness of the beast. For a thousand years the

islands and forests of a great part of the world have been filled with savages who made no steps of advance in art or skill beyond the necessity of being fed and warmed. Certain nations, with a better brain and usually in more temperate climates, have made such progress as to compare with these as these compare with the bear and the wolf.

Victory over things is the office of man. Of course, until it is accomplished, it is the war and insult of things over him. His continual tendency, his great danger, is to overlook the fact that the world is only his teacher, and the nature of sun and moon, plant and animal only means of arousing his interior activity. Enamoured of their beauty, comforted by their convenience, he seeks them as ends, and fast loses sight of the fact that they have worse than no values, that they become noxious, when he becomes their slave.[1]

This apparatus of wants and faculties, this craving body, whose organs ask all the elements and all the functions of Nature for their satisfaction, educate the wondrous creature which they satisfy with light, with heat, with water, with wood, with bread, with wool. The necessities imposed by this most irritable and all-

related texture have taught Man hunting, pasturage, agriculture, commerce, weaving, joining, masonry, geometry, astronomy. Here is a world pierced and belted with natural laws, and fenced and planted with civil partitions and properties, which all put new restraints on the young inhabitant. He too must come into this magic circle of relations, and know health and sickness, the fear of injury, the desire of external good, the charm of riches, the charm of power. The household is a school of power. There, within the door, learn the tragi-comedy of human life. Here is the sincere thing, the wondrous composition for which day and night go round. In that routine are the sacred relations, the passions that bind and sever. Here is poverty and all the wisdom its hated necessities can teach, here labor drudges, here affections glow, here the secrets of character are told, the guards of man, the guards of woman, the compensations which, like angels of justice, pay every debt: the opium of custom, whereof all drink and many go mad. Here is Economy, and Glee, and Hospitality, and Ceremony, and Frankness, and Calamity, and Death, and Hope.[1]

Every one has a trust of power, — every man, every boy a jurisdiction, whether it be over a

cow or a rood of a potato-field, or a fleet of ships, or the laws of a state. And what activity the desire of power inspires! What toils it sustains! How it sharpens the perceptions and stores the memory with facts. Thus a man may well spend many years of life in trade. It is a constant teaching of the laws of matter and of mind. No dollar of property can be created without some direct communication with Nature, and of course some acquisition of knowledge and practical force. It is a constant contest with the active faculties of men, a study of the issues of one and another course of action, an accumulation of power, and, if the higher faculties of the individual be from time to time quickened, he will gain wisdom and virtue from his business.

As every wind draws music out of the Æolian harp, so doth every object in Nature draw music out of his mind. Is it not true that every landscape I behold, every friend I meet, every act I perform, every pain I suffer, leaves me a different being from that they found me? That poverty, love, authority, anger, sickness, sorrow, success, all work actively upon our being and unlock for us the concealed faculties of the mind? Whatever private or petty ends are

frustrated, this end is always answered. Whatever the man does, or whatever befalls him, opens another chamber in his soul, — that is, he has got a new feeling, a new thought, a new organ. Do we not see how amazingly for this end man is fitted to the world?[1]

What leads him to science? Why does he track in the midnight heaven a pure spark, a luminous patch wandering from age to age, but because he acquires thereby a majestic sense of power; learning that in his own constitution he can set the shining maze in order, and finding and carrying their law in his mind, can, as it were, see his simple idea realized up yonder in giddy distances and frightful periods of duration. If Newton come and first of men perceive that not alone certain bodies fall to the ground at a certain rate, but that all bodies in the Universe, the universe of bodies, fall always, and at one rate; that every atom in Nature draws to every other atom, — he extends the power of his mind not only over every cubic atom of his native planet, but he reports the condition of millions of worlds which his eye never saw.[2] And what is the charm which every ore, every new plant, every new fact touching winds, clouds, ocean currents, the secrets of chemical compo-

sition and decomposition possess for Humboldt? What but that much revolving of similar facts in his mind has shown him that always the mind contains in its transparent chambers the means of classifying the most refractory phenomena, of depriving them of all casual and chaotic aspect, and subordinating them to a bright reason of its own, and so giving to man a sort of property, — yea, the very highest property in every district and particle of the globe.

By the permanence of Nature, minds are trained alike, and made intelligible to each other. In our condition are the roots of language and communication, and these instructions we never exhaust.[1]

In some sort the end of life is that the man should take up the universe into himself, or out of that quarry leave nothing unrepresented. Yonder mountain must migrate into his mind. Yonder magnificent astronomy he is at last to import, fetching away moon, and planet, solstice, period, comet and binal star, by comprehending their relation and law. Instead of the timid stripling he was, he is to be the stalwart Archimedes, Pythagoras, Columbus, Newton, of the physic, metaphysic and ethics of the design of the world.[2]

For truly the population of the globe has its

origin in the aims which their existence is to serve; and so with every portion of them. The truth takes flesh in forms that can express it; and thus in history an idea always overhangs, like the moon, and rules the tide which rises simultaneously in all the souls of a generation.[1]

Whilst thus the world exists for the mind; whilst thus the man is ever invited inward into shining realms of knowledge and power by the shows of the world, which interpret to him the infinitude of his own consciousness, — it becomes the office of a just education to awaken him to the knowledge of this fact.

We learn nothing rightly until we learn the symbolical character of life. Day creeps after day, each full of facts, dull, strange, despised things, that we cannot enough despise, — call heavy, prosaic and desert. The time we seek to kill: the attention it is elegant to divert from things around us. And presently the aroused intellect finds gold and gems in one of these scorned facts, — then finds that the day of facts is a rock of diamonds; that a fact is an Epiphany of God.[2]

We have our theory of life, our religion, our philosophy; and the event of each moment, the shower, the steamboat disaster, the passing of a

beautiful face, the apoplexy of our neighbor, are all tests to try our theory, the approximate result we call truth, and reveal its defects. If I have renounced the search of truth, if I have come into the port of some pretending dogmatism, some new church or old church, some Schelling or Cousin, I have died to all use of these new events that are born out of prolific time into multitude of life every hour. I am as a bankrupt to whom brilliant opportunities offer in vain. He has just foreclosed his freedom, tied his hands, locked himself up and given the key to another to keep.

When I see the doors by which God enters into the mind; that there is no sot or fop, ruffian or pedant into whom thoughts do not enter by passages which the individual never left open, I can expect any revolution in character. "I have hope," said the great Leibnitz, "that society may be reformed, when I see how much education may be reformed."[1]

It is ominous, a presumption of crime, that this word Education has so cold, so hopeless a sound. A treatise on education, a convention for education, a lecture, a system, affects us with slight paralysis and a certain yawning of the jaws. We are not encouraged when the law touches it

with its fingers. Education should be as broad as man. Whatever elements are in him that should foster and demonstrate. If he be dexterous, his tuition should make it appear; if he be capable of dividing men by the trenchant sword of his thought, education should unsheathe and sharpen it; if he is one to cement society by his all-reconciling affinities, oh! hasten their action! If he is jovial, if he is mercurial, if he is great-hearted, a cunning artificer, a strong commander, a potent ally, ingenious, useful, elegant, witty, prophet, diviner, — society has need of all these. The imagination must be addressed. Why always coast on the surface and never open the interior of Nature, not by science, which is surface still, but by poetry? Is not the Vast an element of the mind? Yet what teaching, what book of this day appeals to the Vast?

Our culture has truckled to the times, — to the senses. It is not manworthy. If the vast and the spiritual are omitted, so are the practical and the moral. It does not make us brave or free. We teach boys to be such men as we are. We do not teach them to aspire to be all they can. We do not give them a training as if we believed in their noble nature. We scarce educate their bodies. We do not train the eye and the hand.'

We exercise their understandings to the apprehension and comparison of some facts, to a skill in numbers, in words; we aim to make accountants, attorneys, engineers; but not to make able, earnest, great-hearted men. The great object of Education should be commensurate with the object of life. It should be a moral one; to teach self-trust: to inspire the youthful man with an interest in himself; with a curiosity touching his own nature; to acquaint him with the resources of his mind, and to teach him that there is all his strength, and to inflame him with a piety towards the Grand Mind in which he lives. Thus would education conspire with the Divine Providence. A man is a little thing whilst he works by and for himself, but, when he gives voice to the rules of love and justice, is godlike, his word is current in all countries; and all men, though his enemies, are made his friends and obey it as their own.[1]

In affirming that the moral nature of man is the predominant element and should therefore be mainly consulted in the arrangements of a school, I am very far from wishing that it should swallow up all the other instincts and faculties of man. It should be enthroned in his mind, but if it monopolize the man he is not yet sound, he does

not yet know his wealth. He is in danger of becoming merely devout, and wearisome through the monotony of his thought. It is not less necessary that the intellectual and the active faculties should be nourished and matured. Let us apply to this subject the light of the same torch by which we have looked at all the phenomena of the time; the infinitude, namely, of every man. Everything teaches that.

One fact constitutes all my satisfaction, inspires all my trust, viz., this perpetual youth, which, as long as there is any good in us, we cannot get rid of. It is very certain that the coming age and the departing age seldom understand each other. The old man thinks the young man has no distinct purpose, for he could never get anything intelligible and earnest out of him. Perhaps the young man does not think it worth his while to explain himself to so hard and inapprehensive a confessor. Let him be led up with a long-sighted forbearance, and let not the sallies of his petulance or folly be checked with disgust or indignation or despair.

I call our system a system of despair, and I find all the correction, all the revolution that is needed and that the best spirits of this age promise, in one word, in Hope. Nature, when she

sends a new mind into the world, fills it beforehand with a desire for that which she wishes it to know and do. Let us wait and see what is this new creation, of what new organ the great Spirit had need when it incarnated this new Will. A new Adam in the garden, he is to name all the beasts in the field, all the gods in the sky. And jealous provision seems to have been made in his constitution that you shall not invade and contaminate him with the worn weeds of your language and opinions. The charm of life is this variety of genius, these contrasts and flavors by which Heaven has modulated the identity of truth, and there is a perpetual hankering to violate this individuality, to warp his ways of thinking and behavior to resemble or reflect your thinking and behavior. A low self-love in the parent desires that his child should repeat his character and fortune; an expectation which the child, if justice is done him, will nobly disappoint. By working on the theory that this resemblance exists, we shall do what in us lies to defeat his proper promise and produce the ordinary and mediocre. I suffer whenever I see that common sight of a parent or senior imposing his opinion and way of thinking and being on a young soul to which they are totally unfit.

Cannot we let people be themselves, and enjoy life in their own way? You are trying to make that man another *you*. One's enough.[1]

Or we sacrifice the genius of the pupil, the unknown possibilities of his nature, to a neat and safe uniformity, as the Turks whitewash the costly mosaics of ancient art which the Greeks left on their temple walls. Rather let us have men whose manhood is only the continuation of their boyhood, natural characters still; such are able and fertile for heroic action; and not that sad spectacle with which we are too familiar, educated eyes in uneducated bodies.[2]

I like boys, the masters of the playground and of the street, — boys, who have the same liberal ticket of admission to all shops, factories, armories, town-meetings, caucuses, mobs, target-shootings, as flies have; quite unsuspected, coming in as naturally as the janitor, — known to have no money in their pockets, and themselves not suspecting the value of this poverty; putting nobody on his guard, but seeing the inside of the show, — hearing all the asides. There are no secrets from them, they know everything that befalls in the fire-company, the merits of every engine and of every man at the brakes, how to work it, and are swift to try their hand

at every part; so too the merits of every locomotive on the rails, and will coax the engineer to let them ride with him and pull the handles when it goes to the engine-house. They are there only for fun, and not knowing that they are at school, in the court-house, or the cattle-show, quite as much and more than they were, an hour ago, in the arithmetic class.

They know truth from counterfeit as quick as the chemist does. They detect weakness in your eye and behavior a week before you open your mouth, and have given you the benefit of their opinion quick as a wink. They make no mistakes, have no pedantry, but entire belief on experience. Their elections at baseball or cricket are founded on merit, and are right. They don't pass for swimmers until they can swim, nor for stroke-oar until they can row: and I desire to be saved from their contempt. If I can pass with them, I can manage well enough with their fathers.

Everybody delights in the energy with which boys deal and talk with each other; the mixture of fun and earnest, reproach and coaxing, love and wrath, with which the game is played; — the good-natured yet defiant independence of a leading boy's behavior in the school-yard. How

we envy in later life the happy youths to whom their boisterous games and rough exercise furnish the precise element which frames and sets off their school and college tasks, and teaches them, when least they think it, the use and meaning of these. In their fun and extreme freak they hit on the topmost sense of Horace. The young giant, brown from his hunting-tramp, tells his story well, interlarded with lucky allusions to Homer, to Virgil, to college-songs, to Walter Scott; and Jove and Achilles, partridge and trout, opera and binomial theorem, Cæsar in Gaul, Sherman in Savannah, and hazing in Holworthy, dance through the narrative in merry confusion, yet the logic is good. If he can turn his books to such picturesque account in his fishing and hunting, it is easy to see how his reading and experience, as he has more of both, will interpenetrate each other. And every one desires that this pure vigor of action and wealth of narrative, cheered with so much humor and street rhetoric, should be carried into the habit of the young man, purged of its uproar and rudeness, but with all its vivacity entire. His hunting and campings-out have given him an indispensable base: I wish to add a taste for good company through his impatience of bad.

That stormy genius of his needs a little direction to games, charades, verses of society, song, and a correspondence year by year with his wisest and best friends. Friendship is an order of nobility; from its revelations we come more worthily into nature. Society he must have or he is poor indeed; he gladly enters a school which forbids conceit, affectation, emphasis and dulness, and requires of each only the flower of his nature and experience; requires good will, beauty, wit and select information; teaches by practice the law of conversation, namely, to hear as well as to speak.

Meantime, if circumstances do not permit the high social advantages, solitude has also its lessons. The obscure youth learns there the practice instead of the literature of his virtues; and, because of the disturbing effect of passion and sense, which by a multitude of trifles impede the mind's eye from the quiet search of that fine horizon-line which truth keeps, — the way to knowledge and power has ever been an escape from too much engagement with affairs and possessions; a way, not through plenty and superfluity, but by denial and renunciation, into solitude and privation; and, the more is taken away, the more real and inevitable wealth of

being is made known to us. The solitary knows the essence of the thought, the scholar in society only its fair face. There is no want of example of great men, great benefactors, who have been monks and hermits in habit. The bias of mind is sometimes irresistible in that direction. The man is, as it were, born deaf and dumb, and dedicated to a narrow and lonely life.[1] Let him study the art of solitude, yield as gracefully as he can to his destiny. Why cannot he get the good of his doom, and if it is from eternity a settled fact that he and society shall be nothing to each other, why need he blush so, and make wry faces to keep up a freshman's seat in the fine world? Heaven often protects valuable souls charged with great secrets, great ideas, by long shutting them up with their own thoughts. And the most genial and amiable of men must alternate society with solitude, and learn its severe lessons.

There comes the period of the imagination to each, a later youth; the power of beauty, the power of books, of poetry. Culture makes his books realities to him, their characters more brilliant, more effective on his mind, than his actual mates. Do not spare to put novels into

the hands of young people as an occasional holiday and experiment; but, above all, good poetry in all kinds, epic, tragedy, lyric. If we can touch the imagination, we serve them, they will never forget it. Let him read Tom Brown at Rugby, read Tom Brown at Oxford, — better yet, read Hodson's Life — Hodson who took prisoner the king of Delhi. They teach the same truth, — a trust, against all appearances, against all privations, in your own worth, and not in tricks, plotting, or patronage.[1]

I believe that our own experience instructs us that the secret of Education lies in respecting the pupil. It is not for you to choose what he shall know, what he shall do. It is chosen and foreordained, and he only holds the key to his own secret. By your tampering and thwarting and too much governing he may be hindered from his end and kept out of his own. Respect the child. Wait and see the new product of Nature. Nature loves analogies, but not repetitions. Respect the child. Be not too much his parent. Trespass not on his solitude.

But I hear the outcry which replies to this suggestion: — Would you verily throw up the reins of public and private discipline; would

you leave the young child to the mad career of his own passions and whimsies, and call this anarchy a respect for the child's nature? I answer, — Respect the child, respect him to the end, but also respect yourself. Be the companion of his thought, the friend of his friendship, the lover of his virtue, — but no kinsman of his sin. Let him find you so true to yourself that you are the irreconcilable hater of his vice and the imperturbable slighter of his trifling.[1]

The two points in a boy's training are, to keep his *naturel* and train off all but that: — to keep his *naturel*, but stop off his uproar, fooling and horse-play; — keep his nature and arm it with knowledge in the very direction in which it points. Here are the two capital facts, Genius and Drill. The first is the inspiration in the well-born healthy child, the new perception he has of nature. Somewhat he sees in forms or hears in music or apprehends in mathematics, or believes practicable in mechanics or possible in political society, which no one else sees or hears or believes. This is the perpetual romance of new life, the invasion of God into the old dead world, when he sends into quiet houses a young soul with a thought which is not met,

looking for something which is not there, but which ought to be there: the thought is dim but it is sure, and he casts about restless for means and masters to verify it; he makes wild attempts to explain himself and invoke the aid and consent of the bystanders. Baffled for want of language and methods to convey his meaning, not yet clear to himself, he conceives that though not in this house or town, yet in some other house or town is the wise master who can put him in possession of the rules and instruments to execute his will. Happy this child with a bias, with a thought which entrances him, leads him, now into deserts now into cities, the fool of an idea. Let him follow it in good and in evil report, in good or bad company; it will justify itself; it will lead him at last into the illustrious society of the lovers of truth.

In London, in a private company, I became acquainted with a gentleman, Sir Charles Fellowes, who, being at Xanthus, in the Ægean Sea, had seen a Turk point with his staff to some carved work on the corner of a stone almost buried in the soil. Fellowes scraped away the dirt, was struck with the beauty of the sculptured ornaments, and, looking about him, ob-

served more blocks and fragments like this. He returned to the spot, procured laborers and uncovered many blocks. He went back to England, bought a Greek grammar and learned the language; he read history and studied ancient art to explain his stones; he interested Gibson the sculptor; he invoked the assistance of the English Government; he called in the succor of Sir Humphry Davy to analyze the pigments; of experts in coins, of scholars and connoisseurs; and at last in his third visit brought home to England such statues and marble reliefs and such careful plans that he was able to reconstruct, in the British Museum, where it now stands, the perfect model of the Ionic trophy-monument, fifty years older than the Parthenon of Athens, and which had been destroyed by earthquakes, then by iconoclast Christians, then by savage Turks. But mark that in the task he had achieved an excellent education, and become associated with distinguished scholars whom he had interested in his pursuit; in short, had formed a college for himself; the enthusiast had found the master, the masters, whom he sought. Always genius seeks genius, desires nothing so much as to be a pupil and to find those who can lend it aid to perfect itself.[1]

Nor are the two elements, enthusiasm and drill, incompatible. Accuracy is essential to beauty. The very definition of the intellect is Aristotle's: "that by which we know terms or boundaries." Give a boy accurate perceptions. Teach him the difference between the similar and the same. Make him call things by their right names. Pardon in him no blunder. Then he will give you solid satisfaction as long as he lives.[1] It is better to teach the child arithmetic and Latin grammar than rhetoric or moral philosophy, because they require exactitude of performance; it is made certain that the lesson is mastered, and that power of performance is worth more than the knowledge. He can learn anything which is important to him now that the power to learn is secured: as mechanics say, when one has learned the use of tools, it is easy to work at a new craft.

Letter by letter, syllable by syllable, the child learns to read, and in good time can convey to all the domestic circle the sense of Shakspeare. By many steps each just as short, the stammering boy and the hesitating collegian, in the school debate, in college clubs, in mock court, comes at last to full, secure, triumphant unfolding of his thought in the popular assembly, with a

fulness of power that makes all the steps forgotten.

But this function of opening and feeding the human mind is not to be fulfilled by any mechanical or military method; is not to be trusted to any skill less large than Nature itself. You must not neglect the form, but you must secure the essentials. It is curious how perverse and intermeddling we are, and what vast pains and cost we incur to do wrong. Whilst we all know in our own experience and apply natural methods in our own business,— in education our common sense fails us, and we are continually trying costly machinery against nature, in patent schools and academies and in great colleges and universities.

The natural method forever confutes our experiments, and we must still come back to it. The whole theory of the school is on the nurse's or mother's knee. The child is as hot to learn as the mother is to impart. There is mutual delight. The joy of our childhood in hearing beautiful stories from some skilful aunt who loves to tell them, must be repeated in youth. The boy wishes to learn to skate, to coast, to catch a fish in the brook, to hit a mark with a snowball or a stone; and a boy a little older is

just as well pleased to teach him these sciences. Not less delightful is the mutual pleasure of teaching and learning the secret of algebra, or of chemistry, or of good reading and good recitation of poetry or of prose, or of chosen facts in history or in biography.

Nature provided for the communication of thought, by planting with it in the receiving mind a fury to impart it. 'T is so in every art, in every science. One burns to tell the new fact, the other burns to hear it. See how far a young doctor will ride or walk to witness a new surgical operation. I have seen a carriage-maker's shop emptied of all its workmen into the street, to scrutinize a new pattern from New York. So in literature, the young man who has taste for poetry, for fine images, for noble thoughts, is insatiable for this nourishment, and forgets all the world for the more learned friend, — who finds equal joy in dealing out his treasures.

Happy the natural college thus self-instituted around every natural teacher; the young men of Athens around Socrates; of Alexandria around Plotinus; of Paris around Abelard; of Germany around Fichte, or Niebuhr, or Goethe: in short the natural sphere of every leading mind. But

the moment this is organized, difficulties begin. The college was to be the nurse and home of genius; but, though every young man is born with some determination in his nature, and is a potential genius; is at last to be one; it is, in the most, obstructed and delayed, and, whatever they may hereafter be, their senses are now opened in advance of their minds. They are more sensual than intellectual. Appetite and indolence they have, but no enthusiasm. These come in numbers to the college: few geniuses: and the teaching comes to be arranged for these many, and not for those few. Hence the instruction seems to require skilful tutors, of accurate and systematic mind, rather than ardent and inventive masters. Besides, the youth of genius are eccentric, won't drill, are irritable, uncertain, explosive, solitary, not men of the world, not good for every-day association. You have to work for large classes instead of individuals; you must lower your flag and reef your sails to wait for the dull sailors; you grow departmental, routinary, military almost with your discipline and college police. But what doth such a school to form a great and heroic character? What abiding Hope can it inspire? What Reformer will it nurse? What poet will it breed

to sing to the human race? What discoverer of Nature's laws will it prompt to enrich us by disclosing in the mind the statute which all matter must obey? What fiery soul will it send out to warm a nation with his charity? What tranquil mind will it have fortified to walk with meekness in private and obscure duties, to wait and to suffer? Is it not manifest that our academic institutions should have a wider scope; that they should not be timid and keep the ruts of the last generation, but that wise men thinking for themselves and heartily seeking the good of mankind, and counting the cost of innovation, should dare to arouse the young to a just and heroic life; that the moral nature should be addressed in the school-room, and children should be treated as the high-born candidates of truth and virtue?

So to regard the young child, the young man, requires, no doubt, rare patience: a patience that nothing but faith in the remedial forces of the soul can give. You see his sensualism; you see his want of those tastes and perceptions which make the power and safety of your character. Very likely. But he has something else. If he has his own vice, he has its correlative virtue. Every mind should be allowed to make

its own statement in action, and its balance will appear. In these judgments one needs that foresight which was attributed to an eminent reformer, of whom it was said "his patience could see in the bud of the aloe the blossom at the end of a hundred years." Alas for the cripple Practice when it seeks to come up with the bird Theory, which flies before it. Try your design on the best school. The scholars are of all ages and temperaments and capacities. It is difficult to class them, some are too young, some are slow, some perverse. Each requires so much consideration, that the morning hope of the teacher, of a day of love and progress, is often closed at evening by despair. Each single case, the more it is considered, shows more to be done; and the strict conditions of the hours, on one side, and the number of tasks, on the other. Whatever becomes of our method, the conditions stand fast, — six hours, and thirty, fifty, or a hundred and fifty pupils. Something must be done, and done speedily, and in this distress the wisest are tempted to adopt violent means, to proclaim martial law, corporal punishment, mechanical arrangement, bribes, spies, wrath, main strength and ignorance, in lieu of that wise genial providential influence they had hoped,

and yet hope at some future day to adopt. Of course the devotion to details reacts injuriously on the teacher. He cannot indulge his genius, he cannot delight in personal relations with young friends, when his eye is always on the clock, and twenty classes are to be dealt with before the day is done. Besides, how can he please himself with genius, and foster modest virtue? A sure proportion of rogue and dunce finds its way into every school and requires a cruel share of time, and the gentle teacher, who wished to be a Providence to youth, is grown a martinet, sore with suspicions; knows as much vice as the judge of a police court, and his love of learning is lost in the routine of grammars and books of elements.'

A rule is so easy that it does not need a man to apply it; an automaton, a machine, can be made to keep a school so. It facilitates labor and thought so much that there is always the temptation in large schools to omit the endless task of meeting the wants of each single mind, and to govern by steam. But it is at frightful cost. Our modes of Education aim to expedite, to save labor; to do for masses what cannot be done for masses, what must be done reverently, one by one: say rather, the whole world is

needed for the tuition of each pupil. The advantages of this system of emulation and display are so prompt and obvious, it is such a time-saver, it is so energetic on slow and on bad natures, and is of so easy application, needing no sage or poet, but any tutor or schoolmaster in his first term can apply it, — that it is not strange that this calomel of culture should be a popular medicine. On the other hand, total abstinence from this drug, and the adoption of simple discipline and the following of nature, involves at once immense claims on the time, the thoughts, on the life of the teacher. It requires time, use, insight, event, all the great lessons and assistances of God; and only to think of using it implies character and profoundness; to enter on this course of discipline is to be good and great. It is precisely analogous to the difference between the use of corporal punishment and the methods of love. It is so easy to bestow on a bad boy a blow, overpower him, and get obedience without words, that in this world of hurry and distraction, who can wait for the returns of reason and the conquest of self; in the uncertainty too whether that will ever come? And yet the familiar observation of the universal compensations might suggest

the fear that so summary a stop of a bad humor was more jeopardous than its continuance.

Now the correction of this quack practice is to import into Education the wisdom of life. Leave this military hurry and adopt the pace of Nature. Her secret is patience. Do you know how the naturalist learns all the secrets of the forest, of plants, of birds, of beasts, of reptiles, of fishes, of the rivers and the sea? When he goes into the woods the birds fly before him and he finds none; when he goes to the river-bank, the fish and the reptile swim away and leave him alone. His secret is patience; he sits down, and sits still; he is a statue; he is a log. These creatures have no value for their time, and he must put as low a rate on his. By dint of obstinate sitting still, reptile, fish, bird and beast, which all wish to return to their haunts, begin to return. He sits still; if they approach, he remains passive as the stone he sits upon. They lose their fear. They have curiosity too about him. By and by the curiosity masters the fear, and they come swimming, creeping and flying towards him; and as he is still immovable, they not only resume their haunts and their ordinary labors and manners, show themselves to him in their work-day trim, but also volunteer some

degree of advances towards fellowship and good understanding with a biped who behaves so civilly and well. Can you not baffle the impatience and passion of the child by your tranquillity? Can you not wait for him, as Nature and Providence do? Can you not keep for his mind and ways, for his secret, the same curiosity you give to the squirrel, snake, rabbit, and the sheldrake and the deer? He has a secret; wonderful methods in him; he is, — every child, — a new style of man; give him time and opportunity. Talk of Columbus and Newton! I tell you the child just born in yonder hovel is the beginning of a revolution as great as theirs. But you must have the believing and prophetic eye. Have the self-command you wish to inspire. Your teaching and discipline must have the reserve and taciturnity of Nature. Teach them to hold their tongues by holding your own. Say little; do not snarl; do not chide; but govern by the eye. See what they need, and that the right thing is done.

I confess myself utterly at a loss in suggesting particular reforms in our ways of teaching. No discretion that can be lodged with a school-committee, with the overseers or visitors of an academy, of a college, can at all avail to reach these

difficulties and perplexities, but they solve themselves when we leave institutions and address individuals. The will, the male power, organizes, imposes its own thought and wish on others, and makes that military eye which controls boys as it controls men; admirable in its results, a fortune to him who has it, and only dangerous when it leads the workman to overvalue and overuse it and precludes him from finer means. Sympathy, the female force, — which they must use who have not the first, — deficient in instant control and the breaking down of resistance, is more subtle and lasting and creative. I advise teachers to cherish mother-wit. I assume that you will keep the grammar, reading, writing and arithmetic in order; 't is easy and of course you will. But smuggle in a little contraband wit, fancy, imagination, thought. If you have a taste which you have suppressed because it is not shared by those about you, tell them that. Set this law up, whatever becomes of the rules of the school: they must not whisper, much less talk; but if one of the young people says a wise thing, greet it, and let all the children clap their hands. They shall have no book but school-books in the room; but if one has brought in a Plutarch or Shakspeare or Don Quixote or

Goldsmith or any other good book, and understands what he reads, put him at once at the head of the class. Nobody shall be disorderly, or leave his desk without permission, but if a boy runs from his bench, or a girl, because the fire falls, or to check some injury that a little dastard is inflicting behind his desk on some helpless sufferer, take away the medal from the head of the class and give it on the instant to the brave rescuer. If a child happens to show that he knows any fact about astronomy, or plants, or birds, or rocks, or history, that interests him and you, hush all the classes and encourage him to tell it so that all may hear. Then you have made your school-room like the world. Of course you will insist on modesty in the children, and respect to their teachers, but if the boy stops you in your speech, cries out that you are wrong and sets you right, hug him!'

To whatsoever upright mind, to whatsoever beating heart I speak, to you it is committed to educate men. By simple living, by an illimitable soul, you inspire, you correct, you instruct, you raise, you embellish all. By your own act you teach the beholder how to do the practicable. According to the depth from which you draw your life, such is the depth not only of

your strenuous effort, but of your manners and presence.

The beautiful nature of the world has here blended your happiness with your power. Work straight on in absolute duty, and you lend an arm and an encouragement to all the youth of the universe. Consent yourself to be an organ of your highest thought, and lo! suddenly you put all men in your debt, and are the fountain of an energy that goes pulsing on with waves of benefit to the borders of society, to the circumference of things.

VI

THE SUPERLATIVE

When wrath and terror changed Jove's regal port
And the rash-leaping thunderbolt fell short.

For Art, for Music overthrilled,
The wine-cup shakes, the wine is spilled.

THE SUPERLATIVE

THE doctrine of temperance is one of many degrees. It is usually taught on a low platform, but one of great necessity, — that of meats and drinks, and its importance cannot be denied and hardly exaggerated. But it is a long way from the Maine Law to the heights of absolute self-command which respect the conservatism of the entire energies of the body, the mind, and the soul. I wish to point at some of its higher functions as it enters into mind and character.

There is a superlative temperament which has no medium range, but swiftly oscillates from the freezing to the boiling point, and which affects the manners of those who share it with a certain desperation. Their aspect is grimace. They go tearing, convulsed through life, — wailing, praying, exclaiming, swearing. We talk, sometimes, with people whose conversation would lead you to suppose that they had lived in a museum, where all the objects were monsters and extremes. Their good people are phœnixes ; their naughty are like the prophet's figs. They use the superlative of grammar : " most perfect," " most exquisite," " most horrible." Like the French,

they are enchanted, they are desolate, because you have got or have not got a shoe-string or a wafer you happen to want, — not perceiving that superlatives are diminutives, and weaken; that the positive is the sinew of speech, the superlative the fat. If the talker lose a tooth, he thinks the universal thaw and dissolution of things has come. Controvert his opinion and he cries "Persecution!" and reckons himself with Saint Barnabas, who was sawn in two.

Especially we note this tendency to extremes in the pleasant excitement of horror-mongers. Is there something so delicious in disasters and pain? Bad news is always exaggerated, and we may challenge Providence to send a fact so tragical that we cannot contrive to make it a little worse in our gossip.

All this comes of poverty. We are unskilful definers. From want of skill to convey quality, we hope to move admiration by quantity. Language should aim to describe the fact. It is not enough to suggest it and magnify it. Sharper sight would indicate the true line. 'T is very wearisome, this straining talk, these experiences all exquisite, intense and tremendous, — "The best I ever saw;" "I never in my life!" One wishes these terms gazetted and forbidden. Every

favorite is not a cherub, nor every cat a griffin, nor each unpleasing person a dark, diabolical intriguer; nor agonies, excruciations nor ecstasies our daily bread.

Horace Walpole relates that in the expectation, current in London a century ago, of a great earthquake, some people provided themselves with dresses for the occasion. But one would not wear earthquake dresses or resurrection robes for a working jacket, nor make a codicil to his will whenever he goes out to ride; and the secrets of death, judgment and eternity are tedious when recurring as minute-guns. Thousands of people live and die who were never, on a single occasion, hungry or thirsty, or furious or terrified. The books say, "It made my hair stand on end!" Who, in our municipal life, ever had such an experience? Indeed, I believe that much of the rhetoric of terror, — "It froze my blood," "It made my knees knock," etc. — most men have realized only in dreams and nightmares.

Then there is an inverted superlative, or superlative contrary, which shivers, like Demophoön, in the sun: wants fan and parasol on the cold Friday; is tired by sleep; feeds on drugs and poisons; finds the rainbow a discoloration; hates birds and flowers.

The exaggeration of which I complain makes plain fact the more welcome and refreshing. It is curious that a face magnified in a concave mirror loses its expression. All this overstatement is needless. A little fact is worth a whole limbo of dreams, and I can well spare the exaggerations which appear to me screens to conceal ignorance. Among these glorifiers, the coldest stickler for names and dates and measures cannot lament his criticism and coldness of fancy. Think how much pains astronomers and opticians have taken to procure an achromatic lens. Discovery in the heavens has waited for it; discovery on the face of the earth not less. I hear without sympathy the complaint of young and ardent persons that they find life no region of romance, with no enchanter, no giant, no fairies, nor even muses. I am very much indebted to my eyes, and am content that they should see the real world, always geometrically finished without blur or halo. The more I am engaged with it, the more it suffices.

How impatient we are, in these northern latitudes, of looseness and intemperance in speech! Our measure of success is the moderation and low level of an individual's judgment. Doctor Channing's piety and wisdom had such weight

that, in Boston, the popular idea of religion was whatever this eminent divine held. But I remember that his best friend, a man of guarded lips, speaking of him in a circle of his admirers, said: "I have known him long, I have studied his character, and I believe him capable of virtue."[1] An eminent French journalist paid a high compliment to the Duke of Wellington, when his documents were published: "Here are twelve volumes of military dispatches, and the word *glory* is not found in them."

The English mind is arithmetical, values exactness, likes literal statement; stigmatizes any heat or hyperbole as Irish, French, Italian, and infers weakness and inconsequence of character in speakers who use it. It does not love the superlative but the positive degree. Our customary and mechanical existence is not favorable to flights; long nights and frost hold us pretty fast to realities. The people of English stock, in all countries, are a solid people, wearing good hats and shoes, and owners of land whose title-deeds are properly recorded. Their houses are of wood, and brick, and stone, not designed to reel in earthquakes, nor blow about through the air much in hurricanes, nor to be lost under sand-drifts, nor to be made bonfires of by whim-

sical viziers; but to stand as commodious, rentable tenements for a century or two. All our manner of life is on a secure and moderate pattern, such as can last. Violence and extravagance are, once for all, distasteful; competence, quiet, comfort, are the agreed welfare.

Ever a low style is best. "I judge by every man's truth of his degree of understanding," said Chesterfield. And I do not know any advantage more conspicuous which a man owes to his experience in markets and the Exchange, or politics, than the caution and accuracy he acquires in his report of facts. "Uncle Joel's news is always true," said a person to me with obvious satisfaction, and said it justly; for the old head, after deceiving and being deceived many times, thinks, "What 's the use of having to unsay to-day what I said yesterday? I will not be responsible; I will not add an epithet. I will be as moderate as the fact, and will use the same expression, without color, which I received; and rather repeat it several times, word for word, than vary it ever so little." [1]

The first valuable power in a reasonable mind, one would say, was the power of plain statement, or the power to receive things as they befall, and to transfer the picture of them to another

mind unaltered. 'T is a good rule of rhetoric which Schlegel gives, — "In good prose, every word is underscored;" which, I suppose, means, Never italicize.

Spartans, stoics, heroes, saints and gods use a short and positive speech. They are never off their centres. As soon as they swell and paint and find truth not enough for them, softening of the brain has already begun.[1] It seems as if inflation were a disease incident to too much use of words, and the remedy lay in recourse to things. I am daily struck with the forcible understatement of people who have no literary habit. The low expression is strong and agreeable. The citizen dwells in delusions. His dress and draperies, house and stables, occupy him. The poor countryman, having no circumstance of carpets, coaches, dinners, wine and dancing in his head to confuse him, is able to look straight at you, without refraction or prismatic glories, and he sees whether you see straight also, or whether your head is addled by this mixture of wines.

The common people diminish: "a cold snap;" "it rains easy;" "good haying weather." When a farmer means to tell you that he is doing well with his farm, he says, "I don't work as hard

as I did, and I don't mean to." When he wishes to condemn any treatment of soils or of stock, he says, "It won't do any good." Under the Catskill Mountains the boy in the steamboat said, "Come up here, Tony; it looks pretty out-of-doors." The farmers in the region do not call particular summits, as Killington, Camel's Hump, Saddle-back, etc., mountains, but only "them 'ere rises," and reserve the word mountains for the range.

I once attended a dinner given to a great state functionary by functionaries, — men of law, state and trade. The guest was a great man in his own country and an honored diplomatist in this. His health was drunk with some acknowledgment of his distinguished services to both countries, and followed by nine cold hurrahs. There was the vicious superlative. Then the great official spoke and beat his breast, and declared that he should remember this honor to the latest moment of his existence. He was answered again by officials. Pity, thought I, they should lie so about their keen sensibility to the nine cold hurrahs and to the commonplace compliment of a dinner. Men of the world value truth, in proportion to their ability; not by its sacredness, but for its convenience. Of such,

especially of diplomatists, one has a right to expect wit and ingenuity to avoid the lie if they must comply with the form. Now, I had been present, a little before, in the country at a cattle-show dinner, which followed an agricultural discourse delivered by a farmer: the discourse, to say the truth, was bad; and one of our village fathers gave at the dinner this toast: "The orator of the day: his subject deserves the attention of every farmer." The caution of the toast did honor to our village father. I wish great lords and diplomatists had as much respect for truth.

But whilst thus everything recommends simplicity and temperance of action; the utmost directness, the positive degree, we mean thereby that "rightly to be great is not to stir without great argument." [1] Whenever the true objects of action appear, they are to be heartily sought. Enthusiasm is the height of man; it is the passing from the human to the divine.

The superlative is as good as the positive, if it be alive. If man loves the conditioned, he also loves the unconditioned. We don't wish to sin on the other side, and to be purists, nor to check the invention of wit or the sally of humor. 'T is very different, this weak and

wearisome lie, from the stimulus to the fancy which is given by a romancing talker who does not mean to be exactly taken, — like the gallant skipper who complained to his owners that he had pumped the Atlantic Ocean three times through his ship on the passage, and 't was common to strike seals and porpoises in the hold. Or what was similarly asserted of the late Lord Jeffrey, at the Scottish bar, — an attentive auditor declaring on one occasion after an argument of three hours, that he had spoken the whole English language three times over in his speech.

The objection to unmeasured speech is its lie. All men like an impressive fact. The astronomer shows you in his telescope the nebula of Orion, that you may look on that which is esteemed the farthest-off land in visible nature. At the Bank of England they put a scrap of paper that is worth a million pounds sterling into the hands of the visitor to touch. Our travelling is a sort of search for the superlatives or summits of art, — much more the real wonders of power in the human form. The arithmetic of Newton, the memory of Magliabecchi or Mirandola,[1] the versatility of Julius Cæsar, the concentration of Bonaparte, the inspiration

of Shakspeare, are sure of commanding interest and awe in every company of men.

The superlative is the excess of expression. We are a garrulous, demonstrative kind of creatures, and cannot live without much outlet for all our sense and nonsense. And fit expression is so rare that mankind have a superstitious value for it, and it would seem the whole human race agree to value a man precisely in proportion to his power of expression; and to the most expressive man that has existed, namely, Shakspeare, they have awarded the highest place.

The expressors are the gods of the world, but the men whom these expressors revere are the solid, balanced, undemonstrative citizens, who make the reserved guard, the central sense, of the world. For the luminous object wastes itself by its shining, — is luminous because it is burning up; and if the powers are disposed for display, there is all the less left for use and creation. The talent sucks the substance of the man. Superlatives must be bought by too many positives. Gardens of roses must be stripped to make a few drops of otto. And these raptures of fire and frost, which indeed cleanse pedantry out of conversation and make the

speech salt and biting, would cost me the days of well-being which are now so cheap to me, yet so valued. I like no deep stakes. I am a coward at gambling. I will bask in the common sun a while longer.

Children and thoughtless people like exaggerated event and activity; like to run to a house on fire, to a fight, to an execution; like to talk of a marriage, of a bankruptcy, of a debt, of a crime. The wise man shuns all this. I knew a grave man who, being urged to go to a church where a clergyman was newly ordained, said "he liked him very well, but he would go when the interesting Sundays were over."

All rests at last on the simplicity of nature, or real being. Nothing is for the most part less esteemed. We are fond of dress, of ornament, of accomplishments, of talents, but distrustful of health, of soundness, of pure innocence. Yet Nature measures her greatness by what she can spare, by what remains when all superfluity and accessories are shorn off.

Nor is there in Nature itself any swell, any brag, any strain or shock, but a firm common sense through all her elephants and lions, through all her ducks and geese; a true proportion between her means and her performance.

Semper sibi similis.[1] You shall not catch her in any anomalies, nor swaggering into any monsters. In all the years that I have sat in town and forest, I never saw a winged dragon, a flying man, or a talking fish, but ever the strictest regard to rule, and an absence of all surprises. No; Nature encourages no looseness, pardons no errors; freezes punctually at 32°, boils punctually at 212°; crystallizes in water at one invariable angle, in diamond at one, in granite at one; and if you omit the smallest condition, the experiment will not succeed.[2] Her communication obeys the gospel rule, yea or nay. She never expatiates, never goes into the reasons. Plant beechmast and it comes up, or it does not come up. Sow grain, and it does not come up: put lime into the soil and try again, and this time she says yea. To every question an abstemious but absolute reply. The like staidness is in her dealings with us. Nature is always serious, — does not jest with us. Where we have begun in folly, we are brought quickly to plain dealing. Life could not be carried on except by fidelity and good earnest; and she brings the most heartless trifler to determined purpose presently. The men whom she admits to her confidence, the simple and great characters, are

uniformly marked by absence of pretension and by understatement. The old and the modern sages of clearest insight are plain men, who have held themselves hard to the poverty of Nature.[1]

The firmest and noblest ground on which people can live is truth; the real with the real; a ground on which nothing is assumed, but where they speak and think and do what they must, because they are so and not otherwise.[2]

But whilst the basis of character must be simplicity, the expression of character, it must be remembered, is, in great degree, a matter of climate. In the temperate climates there is a temperate speech, in torrid climates an ardent one. Whilst in Western nations the superlative in conversation is tedious and weak, and in character is a capital defect, Nature delights in showing us that in the East it is animated, it is pertinent, pleasing, poetic.[3] Whilst she appoints us to keep within the sharp boundaries of form as the condition of our strength, she creates in the East the uncontrollable yearning to escape from limitation into the vast and boundless; to use a freedom of fancy which plays with all the works of Nature, great or minute, galaxy or grain of dust, as toys and words of the mind; inculcates the tenet of a beatitude to be found in escape

from all organization and all personality, and makes ecstasy an institution.

Religion and poetry are all the civilization of the Arab. "The ground of Paradise," said Mohammed, "is extensive, and the plants of it are hallelujahs." Religion and poetry: the religion teaches an inexorable destiny; it distinguishes only two days in each man's history, the day of his lot, and the day of judgment. The religion runs into asceticism and fate.[1] The costume, the articles in which wealth is displayed, are in the same extremes. Thus the diamond and the pearl, which are only accidental and secondary in their use and value to us, are proper to the Oriental world. The diver dives a beggar, and rises with the price of a kingdom in his hand. A bag of sequins, a jewel, a balsam, a single horse, constitute an estate in countries where insecure institutions make every one desirous of concealable and convertible property. Shall I say, further, that the Orientals excel in costly arts, in the cutting of precious stones, in working in gold, in weaving on hand-looms costly stuffs from silk and wool, in spices, in dyes and drugs, henna, otto and camphor, and in the training of slaves, elephants and camels, — things which are the poetry and superlative of commerce.

On the other hand, — and it is a good illustration of the difference of genius, — the European nations, and, in general, all nations in proportion to their civilization, understand the manufacture of iron. One of the meters of the height to which any civility rose is the skill in the fabric of iron. Universally, the better gold, the worse man. The political economist defies us to show any gold-mine country that is traversed by good roads: or a shore where pearls are found on which good schools are erected. The European civility, or that of the positive degree, is established by coal-mines, by ventilation, by irrigation and every skill — in having water cheap and pure, by iron, by agriculture for bread-stuffs, and manufacture of coarse and family cloths. Our modern improvements have been in the invention of friction matches; of india-rubber shoes; of the famous two parallel bars of iron; then of the air-chamber of Watt, and of the judicious tubing of the engine, by Stephenson, in order to the construction of locomotives.[1]

Meantime, Nature, who loves crosses and mixtures, makes these two tendencies necessary each to the other, and delights to reinforce each peculiarity by imparting the other. The North-

ern genius finds itself singularly refreshed and stimulated by the breadth and luxuriance of Eastern imagery and modes of thinking, which go to check the pedantry of our inventions and the excess of our detail. There is no writing which has more electric power to unbind and animate the torpid intellect than the bold Eastern muse.

If it come back, however, to the question of final superiority, it is too plain that there is no question that the star of empire rolls West: that the warm sons of the Southeast have bent the neck under the yoke of the cold temperament and the exact understanding of the Northwestern races.[1]

VII

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS

These rules were writ in human heart
  By Him who built the day;
The columns of the universe
  Not firmer based than they.

Thou shalt not try
To plant thy shrivelled pedantry
On the shoulders of the sky.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS

SINCE the discovery of Oersted that galvanism and electricity and magnetism are only forms of one and the same force, and convertible each into the other, we have continually suggested to us a larger generalization: that each of the great departments of Nature — chemistry, vegetation, the animal life — exhibits the same laws on a different plane; that the intellectual and moral worlds are analogous to the material. There is a kind of latent omniscience not only in every man, but in every particle.[1] That convertibility we so admire in plants and animal structures, whereby the repairs and the ulterior uses are subserved, when one part is wounded or deficient, by another; this self-help and self-creation proceed from the same original power which works remotely in grandest and meanest structures by the same design, — works in a lobster or a mite-worm as a wise man would if imprisoned in that poor form. 'T is the effort of God, of the Supreme Intellect, in the extremest frontier of his universe.

As this unity exists in the organization of

insect, beast and bird, still ascending to man, and from lower type of man to the highest yet attained, so it does not less declare itself in the spirit or intelligence of the brute. In ignorant ages it was common to vaunt the human superiority by underrating the instinct of other animals; but a better discernment finds that the difference is only of less and more. Experiment shows that the bird and the dog reason as the hunter does, that all the animals show the same good sense in their humble walk that the man who is their enemy or friend does; and, if it be in smaller measure, yet it is not diminished, as his often is, by freak and folly. St. Pierre says of the animals that a moral sentiment seems to have determined their physical organization.

I see the unity of thought and of morals running through all animated Nature; there is no difference of quality, but only of more and less. The animal who is wholly kept down in Nature has no anxieties. By yielding, as he must do, to it, he is enlarged and reaches his highest point. The poor grub, in the hole of a tree, by yielding itself to Nature, goes blameless through its low part and is rewarded at last, casts its filthy hull, expands into a beautiful form with rainbow wings, and makes a part of the summer

day. The Greeks called it Psyche, a manifest emblem of the soul.[1] The man down in Nature occupies himself in guarding, in feeding, in warming and multiplying his body, and, as long as he knows no more, we justify him; but presently a mystic change is wrought, a new perception opens, and he is made a citizen of the world of souls: he feels what is called duty; he is aware that he owes a higher allegiance to do and live as a good member of this universe.[2] In the measure in which he has this sense he is a man, rises to the universal life. The high intellect is absolutely at one with moral nature. A thought is embosomed in a sentiment, and the attempt to detach and blazon the thought is like a show of cut flowers. The moral is the measure of health, and in the voice of Genius I hear invariably the moral tone, even when it is disowned in words; — health, melody and a wider horizon belong to moral sensibility. The finer the sense of justice, the better poet. The believer says to the skeptic: —

> "One avenue was shaded from thine eyes
> Through which I wandered to eternal truth." [3]

Humility is the avenue. To be sure, we exaggerate when we represent these two elements as disunited; every man shares them both; but

it is true that men generally are marked by a decided predominance of one or of the other element.

In youth and in age we are moralists, and in mature life the moral element steadily rises in the regard of all reasonable men.

'T is a sort of proverbial dying speech of scholars (at least it is attributed to many) that which Anthony Wood reports of Nathaniel Carpenter, an Oxford Fellow. "It did repent him," he said, "that he had formerly so much courted the maid instead of the mistress" (meaning philosophy and mathematics to the neglect of divinity). This, in the language of our time, would be ethics.

And when I say that the world is made up of moral forces, these are not separate. All forces are found in Nature united with that which they move: heat is not separate, light is not massed aloof, nor electricity, nor gravity, but they are always in combination. And so moral powers; they are thirsts for action, and the more you accumulate, the more they mould and form.

It is in the stomach of plants that development begins,[1] and ends in the circles of the universe. 'T is a long scale from the gorilla to the gentleman — from the gorilla to Plato, Newton,

Shakspeare — to the sanctities of religion, the refinements of legislation, the summits of science, art and poetry. The beginnings are slow and infirm, but it is an always-accelerated march. The geologic world is chronicled by the growing ripeness of the strata from lower to higher, as it becomes the abode of more highly-organized plants and animals. The civil history of men might be traced by the successive meliorations as marked in higher moral generalizations; — virtue meaning physical courage, then chastity and temperance, then justice and love; — bargains of kings with peoples of certain rights to certain classes, then of rights to masses, — then at last came the day when, as the historians rightly tell, the nerves of the world were electrified by the proclamation that all men are born free and equal.

Every truth leads in another. The bud extrudes the old leaf, and every truth brings that which will supplant it. In the court of law the judge sits over the culprit, but in the court of life in the same hour the judge also stands as culprit before a true tribunal. Every judge is a culprit, every law an abuse. Montaigne kills off bigots as cowhage kills worms; but there is a higher muse there sitting where he durst not soar, of eye so keen that it can report of a realm

in which all the wit and learning of the Frenchman is no more than the cunning of a fox.

It is the same fact existing as sentiment and as will in the mind, which works in Nature as irresistible law, exerting influence over nations, intelligent beings, or down in the kingdoms of brute or of chemical atoms. Nature is a tropical swamp in sunshine, on whose purlieus we hear the song of summer birds, and see prismatic dewdrops — but her interiors are terrific, full of hydras and crocodiles. In the pre-adamite she bred valor only; by and by she gets on to man, and adds tenderness, and thus raises virtue piecemeal.

When we trace from the beginning, that ferocity has uses; only so are the conditions of the then world met, and these monsters are the scavengers, executioners, diggers, pioneers and fertilizers, destroying what is more destructive than they, and making better life possible. We see the steady aim of Benefit in view from the first. Melioration is the law. The cruelest foe is a masked benefactor. The wars which make history so dreary have served the cause of truth and virtue. There is always an instinctive sense of right, an obscure idea which animates either party and which in long periods vindicates itself at last. Thus a sublime confidence is fed at the

bottom of the heart that, in spite of appearances, in spite of malignity and blind self-interest living for the moment, an eternal, beneficent necessity is always bringing things right; and though we should fold our arms,—which we cannot do, for our duty requires us to be the very hands of this guiding sentiment, and work in the present moment,—the evils we suffer will at last end themselves through the incessant opposition of Nature to everything hurtful.

The excellence of men consists in the completeness with which the lower system is taken up into the higher—a process of much time and delicacy, but in which no point of the lower should be left untranslated; so that the warfare of beasts should be renewed in a finer field, for more excellent victories. Savage war gives place to that of Turenne and Wellington, which has limitations and a code. This war again gives place to the finer quarrel of property, where the victory is wealth and the defeat poverty.

The inevitabilities are always sapping every seeming prosperity built on a wrong. No matter how you seem to fatten on a crime, that can never be good for the bee which is bad for the hive. See how these things look in the page of history. Nations come and go, cities rise and

fall, all the instincts of man, good and bad, work, — and every wish, appetite and passion rushes into act and embodies itself in usages, protects itself with laws. Some of them are useful and universally acceptable, hinder none, help all, and these are honored and perpetuated. Others are noxious. Community of property is tried, as when a Tartar horde or an Indian tribe roam over a vast tract for pasturage or hunting; but it is found at last that some establishment of property, allowing each on some distinct terms to fence and cultivate a piece of land, is best for all.

"For my part," said Napoleon, "it is not the mystery of the incarnation which I discover in religion, but the mystery of social order, which associates with heaven that idea of equality which prevents the rich from destroying the poor." [1]

Shall I say then it were truer to see Necessity calm, beautiful, passionless, without a smile, covered with ensigns of woe, stretching her dark warp across the universe? These threads are Nature's pernicious elements, her deluges, miasma, disease, poison; her curdling cold, her hideous reptiles and worse men, cannibals, and the depravities of civilization; the secrets of the

prisons of tyranny, the slave and his master, the proud man's scorn, the orphan's tears, the vices of men, lust, cruelty and pitiless avarice. These make the gloomy warp of ages. Humanity sits at the dread loom and throws the shuttle and fills it with joyful rainbows, until the sable ground is flowered all over with a woof of human industry and wisdom, virtuous examples, symbols of useful and generous arts, with beauty and pure love, courage and the victories of the just and wise over malice and wrong.'

Nature is not so helpless but it can rid itself at last of every crime. An Eastern poet, in describing the golden age, said that God had made justice so dear to the heart of Nature that, if any injustice lurked anywhere under the sky, the blue vault would shrivel to a snake-skin and cast it out by spasms. But the spasms of Nature are years and centuries, and it will tax the faith of man to wait so long.

Man is always throwing his praise or blame on events, and does not see that he only is real, and the world his mirror and echo. He imputes the stroke to fortune, which in reality himself strikes. The student discovers one day that he lives in enchantment: the house, the works, the persons, the days, the weathers — all that he calls

Nature, all that he calls institutions, when once his mind is active are visions merely, wonderful allegories, significant pictures of the laws of the mind; and through this enchanted gallery he is led by unseen guides to read and learn the laws of Heaven. This discovery may come early, — sometimes in the nursery, to a rare child; later in the school, but oftener when the mind is more mature; and to multitudes of men wanting in mental activity it never comes — any more than poetry or art. But it ought to come; it belongs to the human intellect, and is an insight which we cannot spare.

The idea of right exists in the human mind, and lays itself out in the equilibrium of Nature, in the equalities and periods of our system, in the level of seas, in the action and reaction of forces. Nothing is allowed to exceed or absorb the rest; if it do, it is disease, and is quickly destroyed. It was an early discovery of the mind, — this beneficent rule. Strength enters just as much as the moral element prevails. The strength of the animal to eat and to be luxurious and to usurp is rudeness and imbecility. The law is: To each shall be rendered his own. As thou sowest, thou shalt reap. Smite, and thou shalt smart. Serve, and thou shalt be served.

If you love and serve men, you cannot, by any hiding or stratagem, escape the remuneration. Secret retributions are always restoring the level, when disturbed, of the Divine justice. It is impossible to tilt the beam. All the tyrants and proprietors and monopolists of the world in vain set their shoulders to heave the bar. Settles for evermore the ponderous equator to its line, and man and mote and star and sun must range with it, or be pulverized by the recoil.[1]

It is a doctrine of unspeakable comfort. He that plants his foot here passes at once out of the kingdom of illusions. Others may well suffer in the hideous picture of crime with which earth is filled and the life of society threatened, but the habit of respecting that great order which certainly contains and will dispose of our little system, will take all fear from the heart. It did itself create and distribute all that is created and distributed, and, trusting to its power, we cease to care for what it will certainly order well. To good men, as we call good men, this doctrine of Trust is an unsounded secret. They use the word, they have accepted the notion of a mechanical supervision of human life, by which that certain wonderful being whom they call God does take up their affairs where their intel-

ligence leaves them, and somehow knits and co-ordinates the issues of them in all that is beyond the reach of private faculty. They do not see that *He*, that *It*, is there, next and within; the thought of the thought; the affair of affairs; that he is existence, and take him from them and they would not be. They do not see that particulars are sacred to him, as well as the scope and outline; that these passages of daily life are his work; that in the moment when they desist from interference, these particulars take sweetness and grandeur, and become the language of mighty principles.'

A man should be a guest in his own house, and a guest in his own thought. He is there to speak for truth; but who is he? Some clod the truth has snatched from the ground, and with fire has fashioned to a momentary man. Without the truth, he is a clod again. Let him find his superiority in not wishing superiority; find the riches of love which possesses that which it adores; the riches of poverty; the height of lowliness, the immensity of to-day; and, in the passing hour, the age of ages. Wondrous state of man! never so happy as when he has lost all private interests and regards, and exists only in obedience and love of the Author.

The fiery soul said: "Let me be a blot on this fair world, the obscurest, the loneliest sufferer, with one proviso, — that I know it is his agency. I will love him, though he shed frost and darkness on every way of mine." [1] The emphasis of that blessed doctrine lay in lowliness. The new saint gloried in infirmities. Who or what was he? His rise and his recovery were vicarious. He has fallen in another; he rises in another.

We perish, and perish gladly, if the law remains. I hope it is conceivable that a man may go to ruin gladly, if he see that thereby no shade falls on that he loves and adores.[2] We need not always be stipulating for our clean shirt and roast joint *per diem*. We do not believe the less in astronomy and vegetation, because we are writhing and roaring in our beds with rheumatism. Cripples and invalids, we doubt not there are bounding fawns in the forest, and lilies with graceful, springing stem; so neither do we doubt or fail to love the eternal law, of which we are such shabby practisers. Truth gathers itself spotless and unhurt after all our surrenders and concealments and partisanship — never hurt by the treachery or ruin of its best defenders, whether Luther, or William Penn, or Saint Paul. We

answer, when they tell us of the bad behavior of Luther or Paul: "Well, what if he did? Who was more pained than Luther or Paul?" Shall we attach ourselves violently to our teachers and historical personalities, and think the foundation shaken if any fault is shown in their record? But how is the truth hurt by their falling from it? The law of gravity is not hurt by every accident, though our leg be broken. No more is the law of justice by our departure from it.

We are to know that we are never without a pilot. When we know not how to steer, and dare not hoist a sail, we can drift. The current knows the way, though we do not. When the stars and sun appear, when we have conversed with navigators who know the coast, we may begin to put out an oar and trim a sail. The ship of heaven guides itself, and will not accept a wooden rudder.[1]

Have you said to yourself ever: 'I abdicate all choice, I see it is not for me to interfere. I see that I have been one of the crowd; that I have been a pitiful person, because I have wished to be my own master, and to dress and order my whole way and system of living. I thought I managed it very well. I see that my neighbors think so. I have heard prayers, I have prayed

even, but I have never until now dreamed that this undertaking the entire management of my own affairs was not commendable. I have never seen, until now, that it dwarfed me. I have not discovered, until this blessed ray flashed just now through my soul, that there dwelt any power in Nature that would relieve me of my load. But now I see.'

What is this intoxicating sentiment that allies this scrap of dust to the whole of Nature and the whole of Fate, — that makes this doll a dweller in ages, mocker at time, able to spurn all outward advantages, peer and master of the elements? I am taught by it that what touches any thread in the vast web of being touches me. I am representative of the whole; and the good of the whole, or what I call the right, makes me invulnerable.

How came this creation so magically woven that nothing can do me mischief but myself,— that an invisible fence surrounds my being which screens me from all harm that I will to resist? If I will stand upright, the creation cannot bend me. But if I violate myself, if I commit a crime, the lightning loiters by the speed of retribution, and every act is not hereafter but instantaneously rewarded according to its quality. Virtue is the

adopting of this dictate of the universal mind by the individual will. Character is the habit of this obedience, and Religion is the accompanying emotion, the emotion of reverence which the presence of the universal mind ever excites in the individual.

We go to famous books for our examples of character, just as we send to England for shrubs which grow as well in our own door-yards and cow-pastures. Life is always rich, and spontaneous graces and forces elevate it in every domestic circle, which are overlooked while we are reading something less excellent in old authors. From the obscurity and casualty of those which I know, I infer the obscurity and casualty of the like balm and consolation and immortality in a thousand homes which I do not know, all round the world. And I see not why to these simple instincts, simple yet grand, all the heights and transcendencies of virtue and of enthusiasm are not open. There is power enough in them to move the world; and it is not any sterility or defect in ethics, but our negligence of these fine monitors, of these world-embracing sentiments, that makes religion cold and life low.

While the immense energy of the sentiment of duty and the awe of the supernatural exert

incomparable influence on the mind, — yet it is often perverted, and the tradition received with awe, but without correspondent action of the receiver. Then you find so many men infatuated on that topic! Wise on all other, they lose their head the moment they talk of religion. It is the sturdiest prejudice in the public mind that religion is something by itself; a department distinct from all other experiences, and to which the tests and judgment men are ready enough to show on other things, do not apply. You may sometimes talk with the gravest and best citizen, and the moment the topic of religion is broached, he runs into a childish superstition. His face looks infatuated, and his conversation is. When I talked with an ardent missionary, and pointed out to him that his creed found no support in my experience, he replied, "It is not so in your experience, but is so in the other world." I answer: Other world! there is no other world. God is one and omnipresent; here or nowhere is the whole fact. The one miracle which God works evermore is in Nature, and imparting himself to the mind. When we ask simply, 'What is true in thought? what is just in action?' it is the yielding of the private heart to the Divine mind, and all

personal preferences, and all requiring of wonders, are profane.

The word miracle, as it is used, only indicates the ignorance of the devotee, staring with wonder to see water turned into wine, and heedless of the stupendous fact of his own personality. Here he stands, a lonely thought harmoniously organized into correspondence with the universe of mind and matter. What narrative of wonders coming down from a thousand years ought to charm his attention like this?' Certainly it is human to value a general consent, a fraternity of believers, a crowded church; but as the sentiment purifies and rises, it leaves crowds. It makes churches of two, churches of one. A fatal disservice does this Swedenborg or other who offers to do my thinking for me. It seems as if, when the Spirit of God speaks so plainly to each soul, it were an impiety to be listening to one or another saint. Jesus was better than others, because he refused to listen to others and listened at home.

You are really interested in your thought. You have meditated in silent wonder on your existence in this world. You have perceived in the first fact of your conscious life here a miracle so astounding, — a miracle comprehending all

the universe of miracles to which your intelligent life gives you access, — as to exhaust wonder, and leave you no need of hunting here or there for any particular exhibitions of power. Then up comes a man with a text of 1 John v. 7, or a knotty sentence from St. Paul, which he considers as the axe at the root of your tree. You cannot bring yourself to care for it. You say: 'Cut away; my tree is Ygdrasil — the tree of life.'[1] He interrupts for the moment your peaceful trust in the Divine Providence. Let him know by your security that your conviction is clear and sufficient, and if he were Paul himself, you also are here, and with your Creator.

We all give way to superstitions. The house in which we were born is not quite mere timber and stone; is still haunted by parents and progenitors. The creeds into which we were initiated in childhood and youth no longer hold their old place in the minds of thoughtful men, but they are not nothing to us, and we hate to have them treated with contempt. There is so much that we do not know, that we give to these suggestions the benefit of the doubt.

It is a necessity of the human mind that he who looks at one object should look away from

all other objects. He may throw himself upon some sharp statement of one fact, some verbal creed, with such concentration as to hide the universe from him: but the stars roll above; the sun warms him. With patience and fidelity to truth he may work his way through, if only by coming against somebody who believes more fables than he does; and in trying to dispel the illusions of his neighbor, he opens his own eyes.

In the Christianity of this country there is wide difference of opinion in regard to inspiration, prophecy, miracles, the future state of the soul; every variety of opinion, and rapid revolution in opinions, in the last half century. It is simply impossible to read the old history of the first century as it was read in the ninth; to do so you must abolish in your mind the lessons of all the centuries from the ninth to the nineteenth.

Shall I make the mistake of baptizing the daylight, and time, and space, by the name of John or Joshua, in whose tent I chance to behold daylight, and space, and time? What anthropomorphists we are in this, that we cannot let moral distinctions be, but must mould them into human shape! "Mere morality" means — not

put into a personal master of morals.' Our religion is geographical, belongs to our time and place; respects and mythologizes some one time and place and person and people. So it is occasional. It visits us only on some exceptional and ceremonial occasion, on a wedding or a baptism, on a sick-bed, or at a funeral, or perhaps on a sublime national victory or a peace. But that, be sure, is not the religion of the universal, unsleeping providence, which lurks in trifles, in still, small voices, in the secrets of the heart and our closest thoughts, as efficiently as in our proclamations and successes.

Far be it from me to underrate the men or the churches that have fixed the hearts of men and organized their devout impulses or oracles into good institutions. The Church of Rome had its saints, and inspired the conscience of Europe — St. Augustine, and Thomas à Kempis, and Fénelon; the piety of the English Church in Cranmer, and Herbert, and Taylor; the Reformed Church, Scougal; the mystics, Behmen and Swedenborg; the Quakers, Fox and James Naylor. I confess our later generation appears ungirt, frivolous, compared with the religions of the last or Calvinistic age. There was in the last century a serious habitual reference to the

spiritual world, running through diaries, letters and conversation — yes, and into wills and legal instruments also, compared with which our liberation looks a little foppish and dapper.

The religion of seventy years ago was an iron belt to the mind, giving it concentration and force. A rude people were kept respectable by the determination of thought on the eternal world. Now men fall abroad, — want polarity, — suffer in character and intellect. A sleep creeps over the great functions of man. Enthusiasm goes out. In its stead a low prudence seeks to hold society stanch, but its arms are too short, cordage and machinery never supply the place of life.

Luther would cut his hand off sooner than write theses against the pope if he suspected that he was bringing on with all his might the pale negations of Boston Unitarianism.[1] I will not now go into the metaphysics of that reaction by which in history a period of belief is followed by an age of criticism, in which wit takes the place of faith in the leading spirits, and an excessive respect for forms out of which the heart has departed becomes more obvious in the least religious minds. I will not now explore the causes of the result, but the fact must be conceded as

of frequent recurrence, and never more evident than in our American church. To a self-denying, ardent church, delighting in rites and ordinances, has succeeded a cold, intellectual race, who analyze the prayer and psalm of their forefathers, and the more intellectual reject every yoke of authority and custom with a petulance unprecedented. It is a sort of mark of probity and sincerity to declare how little you believe, while the mass of the community indolently follow the old forms with childish scrupulosity, and we have punctuality for faith, and good taste for character.

But I hope the defect of faith with us is only apparent. We shall find that freedom has its own guards, and, as soon as in the vulgar it runs to license, sets all reasonable men on exploring those guards. I do not think the summit of this age truly reached or expressed unless it attain the height which religion and philosophy reached in any former age. If I miss the inspiration of the saints of Calvinism, or of Platonism, or Buddhism, our times are not up to theirs, or, more truly, have not yet their own legitimate force.

Worship is the regard for what is above us. Men are respectable only as they respect. We delight in children because of that religious eye which belongs to them; because of their rever-

ence for their seniors, and for their objects of belief. The poor Irish laborer one sees with respect, because he believes in something, in his church, and in his employers. Superstitious persons we see with respect, because their whole existence is not bounded by their hats and their shoes, but they walk attended by pictures of the imagination, to which they pay homage. You cannot impoverish man by taking away these objects above him without ruin. It is very sad to see men who think their goodness made of themselves; it is very grateful to see those who hold an opinion the reverse of this.[1]

All ages of belief have been great; all of unbelief have been mean. The Orientals believe in Fate. That which shall befall them is written on the iron leaf; they will not turn on their heel to avoid famine, plague or the sword of the enemy. That is great, and gives a great air to the people. We in America are charged with a great deficiency in worship; that reverence does not belong to our character; that our institutions, our politics and our trade have fostered a self-reliance which is small, liliputian, full of fuss and bustle; we look at and will bear nothing above us in the state, and do exceedingly applaud and admire ourselves, and believe in our senses and

understandings, while our imagination and our moral sentiment are desolated. In religion too we want objects above; we are fast losing or have already lost our old reverence; new views of inspiration, of miracles, of the saints, have supplanted the old opinions, and it is vain to bring them again. Revolutions never go backward, and in all churches a certain decay of ancient piety is lamented, and all threatens to lapse into apathy and indifferentism. It becomes us to consider whether we cannot have a real faith and real objects in lieu of these false ones. The human mind, when it is trusted, is never false to itself. If there be sincerity and good meaning — if there be really in us the wish to seek for our superiors, for that which is lawfully above us, we shall not long look in vain.

Meantime there is great centrality, a centripetence equal to the centrifugence. The mystic or theist is never scared by any startling materialism. He knows the laws of gravitation and of repulsion are deaf to French talkers, be they never so witty. If theology shows that opinions are fast changing, it is not so with the convictions of men with regard to conduct. These remain. The most daring heroism, the most accomplished culture, or rapt holiness, never

exhausted the claim of these lowly duties, — never penetrated to their origin, or was able to look behind their source. We cannot disenchant, we cannot impoverish ourselves, by obedience; but by humility we rise, by obedience we command, by poverty we are rich, by dying we live.

We are thrown back on rectitude forever and ever, only rectitude, — to mend one; that is all we can do. But *that* the zealot stigmatizes as a sterile chimney-corner philosophy. Now the first position I make is that natural religion supplies still all the facts which are disguised under the dogma of popular creeds. The progress of religion is steadily to its identity with morals.

How is the new generation to be edified? How should it not? The life of those once omnipotent traditions was really not in the legend, but in the moral sentiment and the metaphysical fact which the legends enclosed — and these survive. A new Socrates, or Zeno, or Swedenborg, or Pascal, or a new crop of geniuses like those of the Elizabethan age, may be born in this age, and, with happy heart and a bias for theism, bring asceticism, duty and magnanimity into vogue again.

It is true that Stoicism, always attractive to the intellectual and cultivated, has now no temples, no academy, no commanding Zeno or Antoninus. It accuses us that it has none: that pure ethics is not now formulated and concreted into a *cultus*, a fraternity with assemblings and holy-days, with song and book, with brick and stone. Why have not those who believe in it and love it left all for this, and dedicated themselves to write out its scientific scriptures to become its Vulgate for millions? I answer for one that the inspirations we catch of this law are not continuous and technical, but joyful sparkles, and are recorded for their beauty, for the delight they give, not for their obligation; and that is their priceless good to men, that they charm and uplift, not that they are imposed. It has not yet its first hymn. But, that every line and word may be coals of true fire, ages must roll, ere these casual wide-falling cinders can be gathered into broad and steady altar-flame.

It does not yet appear what forms the religious feeling will take. It prepares to rise out of all forms to an absolute justice and healthy perception. Here is now a new feeling of humanity infused into public action. Here is contribution of money on a more extended and

systematic scale than ever before to repair public disasters at a distance, and of political support to oppressed parties. Then there are the new conventions of social science, before which the questions of the rights of women, the laws of trade, the treatment of crime, regulation of labor, come for a hearing. If these are tokens of the steady currents of thought and will in these directions, one might well anticipate a new nation.

I know how delicate this principle is, — how difficult of adaptation to practical and social arrangements. It cannot be profaned; it cannot be forced; to draw it out of its natural current is to lose at once all its power. Such experiments as we recall are those in which some sect or dogma made the tie, and that was an artificial element, which chilled and checked the union. But is it quite impossible to believe that men should be drawn to each other by the simple respect which each man feels for another in whom he discovers absolute honesty; the respect he feels for one who thinks life is quite too coarse and frivolous, and that he should like to lift it a little, should like to be the friend of some man's virtue? for another who, underneath his compliances with artificial society, would

dearly like to serve somebody, — to test his own reality by making himself useful and indispensable?

Man does not live by bread alone, but by faith, by admiration, by sympathy. 'T is very shallow to say that cotton, or iron, or silver and gold are kings of the world; there are rulers that will at any moment make these forgotten. Fear will. Love will. Character will. Men live by their credence. Governments stand by it, — by the faith that the people share, — whether it comes from the religion in which they were bred, or from an original conscience in themselves, which the popular religion echoes. If government could only stand by force, if the instinct of the people was to resist the government, it is plain the government must be two to one in order to be secure, and then it would not be safe from desperate individuals. But no; the old commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," holds down New York, and London, and Paris, and not a police or horse-guards.

The credence of men it is that moulds them, and creates at will one or another surface. The mind as it opens transfers very fast its choice from the circumstance to the cause; from courtesy to love, from inventions to science, from

London or Washington law, or public opinion, to the self-revealing idea; from all that talent executes to the sentiment that fills the heart and dictates the future of nations. The commanding fact which I never do not see, is the sufficiency of the moral sentiment. We buttress it up, in shallow hours or ages, with legends, traditions and forms, each good for the one moment in which it was a happy type or symbol of the Power; but the Power sends in the next moment a new lesson, which we lose while our eyes are reverted and striving to perpetuate the old.

America shall introduce a pure religion. Ethics are thought not to satisfy affection. But all the religion we have is the ethics of one or another holy person; as soon as character appears, be sure love will, and veneration, and anecdotes and fables about him, and delight of good men and women in him. And what deeps of grandeur and beauty are known to us in ethical truth, what divination or insight belongs to it! For innocence is a wonderful electuary for purging the eyes to search the nature of those souls that pass before it. What armor it is to protect the good from outward or inward harm, and with what power it converts evil accidents into benefits; the power of its countenance; the power

of its presence! To it alone comes true friendship; to it come grandeur of situation and poetic perception, enriching all it deals with.[1]

Once men thought Spirit divine, and Matter diabolic; one Ormuzd, the other Ahriman. Now science and philosophy recognize the parallelism, the approximation, the unity of the two: how each reflects the other as face answers to face in a glass: nay, how the laws of both are one, or how one is the realization. We are learning not to fear truth.[2]

The man of this age must be matriculated in the university of sciences and tendencies flowing from all past periods. He must not be one who can be surprised and shipwrecked by every bold or subtile word which malignant and acute men may utter in his hearing, but should be taught all skepticisms and unbeliefs, and made the destroyer of all card-houses and paper walls, and the sifter of all opinions, by being put face to face from his infancy with Reality.

A man who has accustomed himself to look at all his circumstances as very mutable, to carry his possessions, his relations to persons, and even his opinions, in his hand, and in all these to pierce to the principle and moral law, and everywhere to find that,— has put himself out of the

reach of all skepticism ; and it seems as if whatever is most affecting and sublime in our intercourse, in our happiness, and in our losses, tended steadily to uplift us to a life so extraordinary, and, one might say, superhuman.

VIII

THE PREACHER

Ascending thorough just degrees
To a consummate holiness,
As angel blind to trespass done,
And bleaching all souls like the sun.

The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to the people his life, — life passed through the fire of thought.

THE PREACHER

IN the history of opinion, the pinch of falsehood shows itself first, not in argument and formal protest, but in insincerity, indifference and abandonment of the Church or the scientific or political or economic institution for other better or worse forms.

The venerable and beautiful traditions in which we were educated are losing their hold on human belief, day by day; a restlessness and dissatisfaction in the religious world marks that we are in a moment of transition; as when the Roman Church broke into Protestant and Catholic, or, earlier, when Paganism broke into Christians and Pagans. The old forms rattle, and the new delay to appear; material and industrial activity have materialized the age, and the mind, haughty with its sciences, disdains the religious forms as childish.

In consequence of this revolution in opinion, it appears, for the time, as the misfortune of this period that the cultivated mind has not the happiness and dignity of the religious sentiment. We are born too late for the old and too early for the new faith. I see in those classes and those

persons in whom I am accustomed to look for tendency and progress, for what is most positive and most rich in human nature, and who contain the activity of to-day and the assurance of to-morrow, — I see in them character, but skepticism; a clear enough perception of the inadequacy of the popular religious statement to the wants of their heart and intellect, and explicit declarations of this fact. They have insight and truthfulness; they will not mask their convictions; they hate cant; but more than this I do not readily find. The gracious motions of the soul, — piety, adoration, — I do not find. Scorn of hypocrisy, pride of personal character, elegance of taste and of manners and pursuit, a boundless ambition of the intellect, willingness to sacrifice personal interests for the integrity of the character, — all these they have; but that religious submission and abandonment which give man a new element and being, and make him sublime, — it is not in churches, it is not in houses. I see movement, I hear aspirations, but I see not how the great God prepares to satisfy the heart in the new order of things. No Church, no State emerges; and when we have extricated ourselves from all the embarrassments of the social problem, the oracle does not yet emit any light on the

mode of individual life. A thousand negatives it utters, clear and strong, on all sides; but the sacred affirmative it hides in the deepest abyss.

We do not see that heroic resolutions will save men from those tides which a most fatal moon heaps and levels in the moral, emotive and intellectual nature. It is certain that many dark hours, many imbecilities, periods of inactivity, — solstices when we make no progress, but stand still, — will occur. In those hours, we can find comfort in reverence of the highest power, and only in that. We never do quite nothing, or never need. It looks as if there were much doubt, much waiting, to be endured by the best. Perhaps there must be austere elections and determinations before any clear vision.

No age and no person is destitute of the sentiment, but in actual history its illustrious exhibitions are interrupted and periodical, — the ages of belief, of heroic action, of intellectual activity, of men cast in a higher mould.

But the sentiment that pervades a nation, the nation must react upon. It is resisted and corrupted by that obstinate tendency to personify and bring under the eyesight what should be the contemplation of Reason alone. The Understanding will write out the vision in a Confession

of Faith. Art will embody this vanishing Spirit in temples, pictures, sculptures and hymns. The senses instantly transfer the reverence from the vanishing Spirit to this steadfast form. Ignorance and passion alloy and degrade. In proportion to a man's want of goodness, it seems to him another and not himself; that is to say, the Deity becomes more objective, until finally flat idolatry prevails.

Of course the virtuous sentiment appears arrayed against the nominal religion, and the true men are hunted as unbelievers, and burned. Then the good sense of the people wakes up so far as to take tacit part with them, to cast off reverence for the Church; and there follows an age of unbelief.

This analysis was inevitable and useful. But the sober eye finds something ghastly in this empiricism. At first, delighted with the triumph of the intellect, the surprise of the results and the sense of power, we are like hunters on the scent and soldiers who rush to battle: but when the game is run down, when the enemy lies cold in his blood at our feet, we are alarmed at our solitude; we would gladly recall the life that so offended us; the face seems no longer that of an enemy.

I say the effect is withering; for, this examination resulting in the constant detection of errors, the flattered understanding assumes to judge all things, and to anticipate the same victories. In the activity of the understanding, the sentiments sleep. The understanding presumes in things above its sphere, and, because it has exposed errors in a church, concludes that a church is an error; because it has found absurdities to which the sentiment of veneration is attached, sneers at veneration; so that analysis has run to seed in unbelief. There is no faith left. We laugh and hiss, pleased with our power in making heaven and earth a howling wilderness.

Unlovely, nay, frightful, is the solitude of the soul which is without God in the world. To wander all day in the sunlight among the tribes of animals, unrelated to anything better; to behold the horse, cow and bird, and to foresee an equal and speedy end to him and them; — no, the bird, as it hurried by with its bold and perfect flight, would disclaim his sympathy and declare him an outcast. To see men pursuing in faith their varied action, warm-hearted, providing for their children, loving their friends, performing their promises, — what are they to this chill, houseless, fatherless, aimless Cain, the

man who hears only the sound of his own footsteps in God's resplendent creation? To him, it is no creation; to him, these fair creatures are hapless spectres: he knows not what to make of it. To him, heaven and earth have lost their beauty. How gloomy is the day, and upon yonder shining pond what melancholy light! I cannot keep the sun in heaven, if you take away the purpose that animates him. The ball, indeed, is there, but his power to cheer, to illuminate the heart as well as the atmosphere, is gone forever. It is a lamp-wick for meanest uses. The words, *great*, *venerable*, have lost their meaning; every thought loses all its depth and has become mere surface.[1]

But religion has an object. It does not grow thin or robust with the health of the votary. The object of adoration remains forever unhurt and identical. We are in transition, from the worship of the fathers which enshrined the law in a private and personal history, to a worship which recognizes the true eternity of the law, its presence to you and me, its equal energy in what is called brute nature as in what is called sacred. The next age will behold God in the ethical laws — as mankind begins to see them in this age, self-equal, self-executing, instan-

taneous and self-affirmed; needing no voucher, no prophet and no miracle besides their own irresistibility, — and will regard natural history, private fortunes and politics, not for themselves, as we have done, but as illustrations of those laws, of that beatitude and love. Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the One breaks in everywhere.[1]

Every movement of religious opinion is of profound importance to politics and social life; and this of to-day has the best omens as being of the most expansive humanity, since it seeks to find in every nation and creed the imperishable doctrines. I find myself always struck and stimulated by a good anecdote, any trait of heroism, of faithful service. I do not find that the age or country makes the least difference; no, nor the language the actors spoke, nor the religion which they professed, whether Arab in the desert, or Frenchman in the Academy. I see that sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion, — the religion of well-doing and daring, men of sturdy truth, men of integrity and feeling for others.[2] My inference is that there is a statement of religion possible which makes all skepticism absurd.

The health and welfare of man consist in ascent from surfaces to solids; from occupation with details to knowledge of the design; from self-activity of talents, which lose their way by the lust of display, to the controlling and reinforcing of talents by the emanation of character. All that we call religion, all that saints and churches and Bibles from the beginning of the world have aimed at, is to suppress this impertinent surface-action, and animate man to central and entire action. The human race are afflicted with a St. Vitus's dance; their fingers and toes, their members, their senses, their talents, are superfluously active, while the torpid heart gives no oracle. When that wakes, it will revolutionize the world. Let that speak, and all these rebels will fly to their loyalty. Now every man defeats his own action, — professes this but practises the reverse; with one hand rows, and with the other backs water. A man acts not from one motive, but from many shifting fears and short motives; it is as if he were ten or twenty less men than himself, acting at discord with one another, so that the result of most lives is zero. But when he shall act from one motive, and all his faculties play true, it is clear mathematically, is it not, that this will tell

in the result as if twenty men had coöperated, — will give new senses, new wisdom of its own kind; that is, not more facts, nor new combinations, but divination, or direct intuition of the state of men and things?

The lessons of the moral sentiment are, once for all, an emancipation from that anxiety which takes the joy out of all life. It teaches a great peace. It comes itself from the highest place. It is that, which being in all sound natures, and strongest in the best and most gifted men, we know to be implanted by the Creator of Men. It is a commandment at every moment and in every condition of life to do the duty of that moment and to abstain from doing the wrong. And it is so near and inward and constitutional to each, that no commandment can compare with it in authority. All wise men regard it as the voice of the Creator himself.

I know there are those to whom the question of what shall be believed is the more interesting because they are to proclaim and teach what they believe.

All positive rules, ceremonial, ecclesiastical, distinctions of race or of person, are perishable; only those distinctions hold which are, in the nature of things, not matters of positive ordi-

nance. As the earth we stand upon is not imperishable, but is chemically resolvable into gases and nebulæ, so is the universe an infinite series of planes, each of which is a false bottom; and when we think our feet are planted now at last on adamant, the slide is drawn out from under us.

We must reconcile ourselves to the new order of things. But is it a calamity? The poet Wordsworth greeted even the steam-engine and railroads; and when they came into his poetic Westmoreland, bisecting every delightful valley, deforming every consecrated grove, yet manned himself to say, —

> "In spite of all that Beauty may disown
> In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace
> Her lawful offspring in man's art, and Time,
> Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother Space,
> Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown
> Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime." [1]

And we can keep our religion, despite of the violent railroads of generalization, whether French or German, that block and intersect our old parish highways.

In matters of religion, men eagerly fasten their eyes on the differences between their creed and yours, whilst the charm of the study is in

finding the agreements and identities in all the religions of men. What is essential to the theologian is, that whilst he is select in his opinions, severe in his search for truth, he shall be broad in his sympathies, — not to allow himself to be excluded from any church. He is to claim for his own whatever eloquence of St. Chrysostom or St. Jerome or St. Bernard he has felt. So not less of Bishop Taylor or George Herbert or Henry Scougal. He sees that what is most effective in the writer is what is dear to his, the reader's, mind.[1]

Be not betrayed into undervaluing the churches which annoy you by their bigoted claims. They too were real churches. They answered to their times the same need as your rejection of them does to ours. The Catholic Church has been immensely rich in men and influences. Augustine, à Kempis, Fénelon, breathe the very spirit which now fires you. So with Cudworth, More, Bunyan. I agree with them more than I disagree. I agree with their heart and motive; my discontent is with their limitations and surface and language. Their statement is grown as fabulous as Dante's Inferno. Their purpose is as real as Dante's sentiment and hatred of vice. Always put the best interpretation on a tenet.

Why not on Christianity, wholesome, sweet and poetic? It is the record of a pure and holy soul, humble, absolutely disinterested, a truth-speaker and bent on serving, teaching and uplifting men. Christianity taught the capacity, the element, to love the All-perfect without a stingy bargain for personal happiness. It taught that to love him was happiness, — to love him in other's virtues.

An era in human history is the life of Jesus; and the immense influence for good leaves all the perversion and superstition almost harmless. Mankind have been subdued to the acceptance of his doctrine, and cannot spare the benefit of so pure a servant of truth and love.

Of course a hero so attractive to the hearts of millions drew the hypocrite and the ambitious into his train, and they used his name to falsify his history and undo his work. I fear that what is called religion, but is perhaps pew-holding, not obeys but conceals the moral sentiment. I put it to this simple test: Is a rich rogue made to feel his roguery among divines or literary men? No? Then 't is rogue again under the cassock. What sort of respect can these preachers or newspapers inspire by their weekly praises of texts and saints, when we know that they would say just the same things if Beelzebub had

written the chapter, provided it stood where it does in the public opinion?

Anything but unbelief, anything but losing hold of the moral intuitions, as betrayed in the clinging to a form of devotion or a theological dogma; as if it was the liturgy, or the chapel, that was sacred, and not justice and humility and the loving heart and serving hand.[1]

But besides the passion and interest which pervert, is the shallowness which impoverishes. The opinions of men lose all worth to him who perceives that they are accurately predictable from the ground of their sect. Nothing is more rare, in any man, than an act of his own. The clergy are as like as peas. I cannot tell them apart. It was said: They have bronchitis because they read from their papers sermons with a near voice, and then, looking at the congregation, they try to speak with their far voice, and the shock is noxious. I think they do this, or the converse of this, with their thought. They look into Plato, or into the mind, and then try to make parish mince-meat of the amplitudes and eternities, and the shock is noxious. It is the old story again: once we had wooden chalices and golden priests, now we have golden chalices and wooden priests.

The clergy are always in danger of becoming wards and pensioners of the so-called producing classes. Their first duty is self-possession founded on knowledge. The man of practice or worldly force requires of the preacher a talent, a force, like his own; the same as his own, but wholly applied to the priest's things. He does not forgive an application in the preacher to the merchant's things. He wishes him to be such a one as he himself should have been, had he been priest. He is sincere and ardent in his vocation, and plunged in it. Let priest or poet be as good in theirs.

The simple fact that the pulpit exists, that all over this country the people are waiting to hear a sermon on Sunday, assures that opportunity which is inestimable to young men, students of theology, for those large liberties. The existence of the Sunday, and the pulpit waiting for a weekly sermon, give him the very conditions, the πού στῶ he wants.[1] That must be filled, and he is armed to fill it. Let him value his talent as a door into Nature. Let him see his performances only as limitations. Then, over all, let him value the sensibility that receives, that loves, that dares, that affirms.

There are always plenty of young, ignorant

people, — though some of them are seven, and some of them seventy years old, — wanting peremptorily instruction; but in the usual averages of parishes, only one person that is qualified to give it. It is only that person who concerns me, — him only that I see. The others are very amiable and promising, but they are only neuters in the hive, — every one a possible royal bee, but not now significant. It does not signify what they say or think to-day; 't is the cry and the babble of the nursery, and their only virtue, docility. Buckminster, Channing, Dr. Lowell, Edward Taylor, Parker, Bushnell, Chapin, — it is they who have been necessary, and the opinions of the floating crowd of no importance whatever.

I do not love sensation preaching, — the personalities for spite, the hurrah for our side, the review of our appearances and what others say of us! That you may read in the gazette. We come to church properly for self-examination, for approach to principles to see how it stands with *us*, with the deep and dear facts of right and love. At the same time it is impossible to pay no regard to the day's events, to the public opinion of the times, to the stirring shouts of parties, to the calamities and prosperities of

our town and country; to war and peace, new events, great personages, to good harvests, new resources, to bankruptcies, famines and desolations. We are not stocks or stones, we are not thinking machines, but allied to men around us, as really though not quite so visibly as the Siamese brothers. And it were inhuman to affect ignorance or indifference on Sundays to what makes our blood beat and our countenance dejected Saturday or Monday. No, these are fair tests to try our doctrines by, and see if they are worth anything in life. The value of a principle is the number of things it will explain; and there is no good theory of disease which does not at once suggest a cure.[1]

Man proposes, but God disposes. We shall not very long have any part or lot in this earth, in whose affairs we so hotly mix, and where we feel and speak so energetically of our country and our cause. It is a comfort to reflect that the gigantic evils which seem to us so mischievous and so incurable will at last end themselves and rid the world of their presence, as all crime sooner or later must. But be that event for us soon or late, we are not excused from playing our short part in the best manner we can, no matter how insignificant our aid may be. Our

children will be here, if we are not; and their children's history will be colored by our action. But if we have no children, or if the events in which we have taken our part shall not see their solution until a distant future, there is yet a deeper fact; that as much justice as we can see and practise is useful to men, and imperative, whether we can see it to be useful or not.

'The essential ground of a new book or a new sermon is a new spirit. The author has a new thought, sees the sweep of a more comprehensive tendency than others are aware of; falters never, but takes the victorious tone. For power is not so much shown in talent as in tone. And if I had to counsel a young preacher, I should say: When there is any difference felt between the foot-board of the pulpit and the floor of the parlor, you have not yet said that which you should say.'

Inspiration will have advance, affirmation, the forward foot, the ascending state; it will be an opener of doors; it will invent its own methods: the new wine will make the bottles new. Spirit is motive and ascending. Only let there be a deep observer, and he will make light of new shop and new circumstance that afflict you; new shop, or old cathedral, it is all one to him.

He will find the circumstance not altered, as deep a cloud of mystery on the cause, as dazzling a glory on the invincible law. Given the insight, and he will find as many beauties and heroes and strokes of genius close by him as Dante or Shakspeare beheld. A vivid thought brings the power to paint it; and in proportion to the depth of its source is the force of its projection. We are happy and enriched; we go away invigorated, assisted each in our own work, however different, and shall not forget to come again for new impulses.

The supposed embarrassments to young clergymen exist only to feeble wills. They need not consider them. The differences of opinion, the strength of old sects or timorous literalists, since it is not armed with prisons or fagots as in ruder times or countries, is not worth considering except as furnishing a needed stimulus. That gray deacon or respectable matron with Calvinistic antecedents, you can readily see, could not have presented any obstacle to the march of St. Bernard or of George Fox, of Luther or of Theodore Parker. And though I observe the deafness to counsel among men, yet the power of sympathy is always great; and affirmative discourse, presuming assent, will often

obtain it when argument would fail.[1] Such, too, is the active power of good temperament. Great sweetness of temper neutralizes such vast amounts of acid! As for position, the position is always the same, — insulting the timid, and not taken by storm, but flanked, I may say, by the resolute, simply by minding their own affair. Speak the affirmative; emphasize your choice by utter ignoring of all that you reject; seeing that opinions are temporary, but convictions uniform and eternal, — seeing that a sentiment never loses its pathos or its persuasion, but is youthful after a thousand years.[2]

The inevitable course of remark for us, when we meet each other for meditation on life and duty, is not so much the enjoining of this or that cure or burning out of our errors of practice, as simply the celebration of the power and beneficence amid which and by which we live, not critical, but affirmative.

All civil mankind have agreed in leaving one day for contemplation against six for practice. I hope that day will keep its honor and its use. A wise man advises that we should see to it that we read and speak two or three reasonable words, every day, amid the crowd of affairs and the noise of trifles. I should say boldly that we

should astonish every day by a beam out of eternity; retire a moment to the grand secret we carry in our bosom, of inspiration from heaven. But certainly on this seventh let us be the children of liberty, of reason, of hope; refresh the sentiment; think as spirits think, who belong to the universe, whilst our feet walk in the streets of a little town and our hands work in a small knot of affairs.[1] We shall find one result, I am sure, — a certain originality and a certain haughty liberty proceeding out of our retirement and self-communion, which streets can never give, infinitely removed from all vaporing and bravado, and which yet is more than a match for any physical resistance. It is true that which they say of our New England œstrum, which will never let us stand or sit, but drives us like mad through the world. The calmest and most protected life cannot save us. We want some intercalated days, to bethink us and to derive order to our life from the heart. That should be the use of the Sabbath, — to check this headlong racing and put us in possession of ourselves once more, for love or for shame.

The Sabbath changes its forms from age to age, but the substantial benefit endures. We no longer recite the old creeds of Athanasius or

Arius, of Calvin or Hopkins. The forms are flexible, but the uses not less real. The old heart remains as ever with its old human duties. The old intellect still lives, to pierce the shows to the core. Truth is simple, and will not be antique; is ever present, and insists on being of this age and of this moment. Here is thought and love and truth and duty, new as on the first day of Adam and of angels.

"There are two pairs of eyes in man; and it is requisite that the pair which are beneath should be closed when the pair that are above them perceive; and that when the pair above are closed, those which are beneath are opened."[1] The lower eyes see only surfaces and effects, the upper eyes behold causes and the connection of things. And when we go alone, or come into the house of thought and worship, we come with purpose to be disabused of appearances, to see realities, the great lines of our destiny, to see that life has no caprice or fortune, is no hopping squib, but a growth after immutable laws under beneficent influences the most immense. The Church is open to great and small in all nations; and how rare and lofty, how unattainable, are the aims it labors to set before men! We come to educate, come to isolate, to be abstractionists;

in fine, to open the upper eyes to the deep mystery of cause and effect, to know that though ministers of justice and power fail, Justice and Power fail never. The open secret of the world is the art of subliming a private soul with inspirations from the great and public and divine Soul from which we live.[1]

IX

THE MAN OF LETTERS

On bravely through the sunshine and the showers,
Time hath his work to do, and we have ours.

THE MAN OF LETTERS

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LITERARY SOCIETIES OF DARTMOUTH AND WATERVILLE COLLEGES, 1863.

GENTLEMEN of the Literary Societies: Some of you are to-day saying your farewells to each other, and to-morrow will receive the parting honors of the College. You go to be teachers, to become physicians, lawyers, divines; in due course, statesmen, naturalists, philanthropists; I hope, some of you, to be the men of letters, critics, philosophers; perhaps the rare gift of poetry already sparkles, and may yet burn. At all events, before the shadows of these times darken over your youthful sensibility and candor, let me use the occasion which your kind request gives me, to offer you some counsels which an old scholar may without pretension bring to youth, in regard to the career of letters, — the power and joy that belong to it, and its high office in evil times. I offer perpetual congratulation to the scholar; he has drawn the white lot in life. The very disadvantages of his condition point at superiorities. He is too good for the world; he is in advance of his race; his

function is prophetic. He belongs to a superior society, and is born one or two centuries too early for the rough and sensual population into which he is thrown. But the Heaven which sent him hither knew that well enough, and sent him as a leader to lead. Are men perplexed with evil times? The inviolate soul is in perpetual telegraphic communication with the source of events. He has earlier information, a private despatch which relieves him of the terror which presses on the rest of the community. He is a learner of the laws of Nature and the experiences of history; a prophet surrendered with self-abandoning sincerity to the Heaven which pours through him its will to mankind. This is the theory, but you know how far this is from the fact, that nothing has been able to resist the tide with which the material prosperity of America in years past has beat down the hope of youth, the piety of learning.[1] The country was full of activity, with its wheat, coal, iron, cotton; the wealth of the globe was here, too much work and not men enough to do it. Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia sent millions of laborers; still the need was more. Every kind of skill was in demand, and the bribe came to men of intellectual culture, — Come, drudge in our mill.

America at large exhibited such a confusion as California showed in 1849, when the cry of gold was first raised. All the distinctions of profession and habit ended at the mines. All the world took off their coats and worked in shirt-sleeves. Lawyers went and came with pick and wheelbarrow; doctors of medicine turned teamsters; stray clergymen kept the bar in saloons; professors of colleges sold cigars, mince-pies, matches, and so on. It is the perpetual tendency of wealth to draw on the spiritual class, not in this coarse way, but in plausible and covert ways. It is charged that all vigorous nations, except our own, have balanced their labor by mental activity, and especially by the imagination, — the cardinal human power, the angel of earnest and believing ages. The subtle Hindoo, who carried religion to ecstasy and philosophy to idealism, produced the wonderful epics of which, in the present century, the translations have added new regions to thought. The Egyptian built Thebes and Karnak on a scale which dwarfs our art, and by the paintings on their interior walls invited us into the secret of the religious belief whence he drew such power. The Greek was so perfect in action and in imagination, his poems, from Homer to Euripides, so charm-

ing in form and so true to the human mind, that we cannot forget or outgrow their mythology.[1] The Hebrew nation compensated for the insignificance of its members and territory by its religious genius, its tenacious belief; its poems and histories cling to the soil of this globe like the primitive rocks. On the south and east shores of the Mediterranean Mahomet impressed his fierce genius how deeply into the manners, language and poetry of Arabia and Persia! See the activity of the imagination in the Crusades: the front of morn was full of fiery shapes; the chasm was bridged over; heaven walked on earth, and Earth could see with eyes the Paradise and the Inferno. Dramatic "mysteries" were the entertainment of the people. Parliaments of Love and Poesy served them, instead of the House of Commons, Congress and the newspapers. In Puritanism, how the whole Jewish history became flesh and blood in those men, let Bunyan show.[2] Now it is agreed that we are utilitarian; that we are skeptical, frivolous; that with universal cheap education we have stringent theology, but religion is low. There is much criticism, not on deep grounds, but an affirmative philosophy is wanting. Our profoundest philosophy (if it were not contradiction in terms)

is skepticism. The great poem of the age is the disagreeable poem of Faust, — of which the Festus of Bailey and the Paracelsus of Browning are English variations.[1] We have superficial sciences, restless, gossiping, aimless activity. We run to Paris, to London, to Rome, to Mesmerism, Spiritualism, to Pusey, to the Catholic Church, as if for the want of thought, and those who would check and guide have a dreary feeling that in the change and decay of the old creeds and motives there was no offset to supply their place. Our industrial skill, arts ministering to convenience and luxury, have made life expensive, and therefore greedy, careful, anxious; have turned the eyes downward to the earth, not upward to thought.

Ernest Renan finds that Europe has thrice assembled for exhibitions of industry, and not a poem graced the occasion; and nobody remarked the defect.[2] A French prophet of our age, Fourier, predicted that one day, instead of by battles and Œcumenical Councils, the rival portions of humanity would dispute each other's excellence in the manufacture of little cakes.

"In my youth," said a Scotch mountaineer, "a Highland gentleman measured his importance, by the number of men his domain could

support. After some time the question was, to know how many great cattle it would feed. To-day we are come to count the number of sheep. I suppose posterity will ask how many rats and mice it will feed."

Dickens complained that in America, as soon as he arrived in any of the Western towns, a committee waited on him and invited him to deliver a temperance lecture. Bowditch translated Laplace, and when he removed to Boston, the Hospital Life Assurance Company insisted that he should make their tables of annuities. Napoleon knows the art of war, but should not be put on picket duty. Linnæus or Robert Brown must not be set to raise gooseberries and cucumbers, though they be excellent botanists. A shrewd broker out of State Street visited a quiet countryman possessed of all the virtues, and in his glib talk said, " With your character now I could raise all this money at once, and make an excellent thing of it."

There is an oracle current in the world, that nations die by suicide. The sign of it is the decay of thought. Niebuhr has given striking examples of that fatal portent; as in the loss of power of thought that followed the disasters of the Athenians in Sicily.

I cannot forgive a scholar his homeless despondency. He represents intellectual or spiritual force. I wish him to rely on the spiritual arm; to live by his strength, not by his weakness. A scholar defending the cause of slavery, of arbitrary government, of monopoly, of the oppressor, is a traitor to his profession. He has ceased to be a scholar. He is not company for clean people.' The worst times only show him how independent he is of times; only relieve and bring out the splendor of his privilege. Disease alarms the family, but the physician sees in it a temporary mischief, which he can check and expel. The fears and agitations of men who watch the markets, the crops, the plenty or scarcity of money, or other superficial events, are not for him. He knows that the world is always equal to itself; that the forces which uphold and pervade it are eternal. Air, water, fire, iron, gold, wheat, electricity, animal fibre, have not lost a particle of power, and no decay has crept over the spiritual force which gives bias and period to boundless Nature. Bad times, — what are bad times? Nature is rich, exuberant, and mocks at the puny forces of destruction. Man makes no more impression on her wealth than the caterpillar or the cankerworm whose petty

ravage, though noticed in an orchard or a village, is insignificant in the vast exuberance of the summer. There is no unemployed force in Nature. All decomposition is recomposition. War disorganizes, but it is to reorganize. Weeks, months pass — a new harvest; trade springs up, and there stand new cities, new homes, all rebuilt and sleepy with permanence. Italy, France — a hundred times those countries have been trampled with armies and burned over: a few summers, and they smile with plenty and yield new men and new revenues.

If churches are effete, it is because the new Heaven forms. You are here as the carriers of the power of Nature, — as Roger Bacon, with his secret of gunpowder, with his secret of the balloon and of steam; as Copernicus, with his secret of the true astronomy; as Columbus, with America in his log-book; as Newton, with his gravity; Harvey, with his circulation; Smith, with his law of trade; Franklin, with lightning; Adams, with Independence; Kant, with pure reason; Swedenborg, with his spiritual world. You are the carriers of ideas which are to fashion the mind and so the history of this breathing world, so as they shall be, and not otherwise.[1]

Every man is a scholar potentially, and does

not need any one good so much as this of right thought.

"Calm pleasures here abide, majestic pains." [1]

Coleridge traces "three silent revolutions," of which the first was "when the clergy fell from the Church." A scholar was once a priest. But the Church clung to ritual, and the scholar clung to joy, low as well as high, and thus the separation was a mutual fault. But I think it is a schism which must be healed. The true scholar is the Church. Only the duties of Intellect must be owned. Down with these dapper trimmers and sycophants! let us have masculine and divine men, formidable lawgivers, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, who warp the churches of the world from their traditions, and penetrate them through and through with original perception. The intellectual man lives in perpetual victory. As certainly as water falls in rain on the tops of mountains and runs down into valleys, plains and pits, so does thought fall first on the best minds, and run down, from class to class, until it reaches the masses, and works revolutions.

Nature says to the American: "I understand mensuration and numbers; I compute the ellipse

of the moon, the ebb and flow of waters, the curve and the errors of planets, the balance of attraction and recoil. I have measured out to you by weight and tally the powers you need. I give you the land and sea, the forest and the mine, the elemental forces, nervous energy. When I add difficulty, I add brain. See to it that you hold and administer the continent for mankind. One thing you have rightly done. You have offered a patch of land in the wilderness to every son of Adam who will till it. Other things you have begun to do, — to strike off the chains which snuffling hypocrites had bound on the weaker race." [1] You are to imperil your lives and fortunes for a principle. The ambassador is held to maintain the dignity of the Republic which he represents. But what does the scholar represent? The organ of ideas, the subtle force which creates Nature and men and states; — consoler, upholder, imparting pulses of light and shocks of electricity, guidance and courage. So let his habits be formed, and all his economies heroic; no spoiled child, no drone, no epicure, but a stoic, formidable, athletic, knowing how to be poor, loving labor, and not flogging his youthful wit with tobacco and wine; treasuring his youth. I wish the

youth to be an armed and complete man; no helpless angel to be slapped in the face, but a man dipped in the Styx of human experience, and made invulnerable so,—self-helping. A redeeming trait of the Sophists of Athens, Hippias and Gorgias, is that they made their own clothes and shoes. Learn to harness a horse, to row a boat, to camp down in the woods, to cook your supper. I chanced lately to be at West Point, and, after attending the examination in scientific classes, I went into the barracks.[1] The chamber was in perfect order; the mattress on the iron camp-bed rolled up, as if ready for removal. I asked the first Cadet, "Who makes your bed?" "I do." "Who fetches your water?" "I do." "Who blacks your shoes?" "I do." It was so in every room. These are first steps to power. Learn of Samuel Johnson or David Hume, that it is a primary duty of the man of letters to secure his independence.

Stand by your order. 'T is some thirty years since the days of the Reform Bill in England, when on the walls in London you read everywhere placards, "Down with the Lords." At that time, Earl Grey, who was leader of Reform, was asked, in Parliament, his policy on the measures of the Radicals. He replied, "I shall stand

by my order." Where there is no vision, the people perish. The fault lies with the educated class, the men of study and thought. There is a very low feeling of duty: the merchant is true to the merchant, the noble in England and Europe stands by his order, the politician believes in his arts and combinations; but the scholar does not stand by his order, but defers to the men of this world.[1]

Gentlemen, I am here to commend to you your art and profession as thinkers. It is real. It is the secret of power. It is the art of command. All superiority is this, or related to this. "All that the world admires comes from within." Thought makes us men; ranks us; distributes society; distributes the work of the world; is the prolific source of all arts, of all wealth, of all delight, of all grandeur. Men are as they believe. Men are as they think, and the man who knows any truth not yet discerned by other men, is master of all other men so far as that truth and its wide relations are concerned.

Intellect measures itself by its counteraction to any accumulation of material force. There is no mass which it cannot surmount and dispose of. The exertions of this force are the eminent experiences, — out of a long life all that is worth

remembering. These are the moments that balance years. Does any one doubt between the strength of a thought and that of an institution? Does any one doubt that a good general is better than a park of artillery? See a political revolution dogging a book. See armies, institutions, literatures, appearing in the train of some wild Arabian's dream.

There is a proverb that Napoleon, when the Mameluke cavalry approached the French lines, ordered the grenadiers to the front, and the asses and the *savans* to fall into the hollow square. It made a good story, and circulated in that day. But how stands it now? The military expedition was a failure. Bonaparte himself deserted, and the army got home as it could, all fruitless; not a trace of it remains. All that is left of it is the researches of those *savans* on the antiquities of Egypt, including the great work of Denon, which led the way to all the subsequent studies of the English and German scholars on that foundation. Pytheas of Ægina was victor in the Pancratium of the boys, at the Isthmian games. He came to the poet Pindar and wished him to write an ode in his praise, and inquired what was the price of a poem. Pindar replied that he should give him one talent, about a thousand

dollars of our money. "A talent!" cried Pytheas; "why, for so much money I can erect a statue of bronze in the temple." "Very likely." On second thoughts, he returned and paid for the poem. And now not only all the statues of bronze in the temples of Ægina are destroyed, but the temples themselves, and the very walls of the city are utterly gone, whilst the ode of Pindar, in praise of Pytheas, remains entire.

The treachery of scholars! They are idealists, and should stand for freedom, justice, and public good. The scholar is bound to stand for all the virtues and all the liberties, — liberty of trade, liberty of the press, liberty of religion, — and he should open all the prizes of success and all the roads of Nature to free competition.

The country complains loudly of the inefficiency of the army. It was badly led. But, before this, it was not the army alone, it was the population that was badly led. The clerisy, the spiritual guides, the scholars, the seers have been false to their trust.[1]

Rely on yourself. There is respect due to your teachers, but every age is new, and has problems to solve, insoluble by the last age. Men over forty are no judges of a book written

in a new spirit. Neither your teachers, nor the universal teachers, the laws, the customs or dogmas of nations, neither saint nor sage, can compare with that counsel which is open to you. No, it is not nations, no, nor even masters, not at last a few individuals or any heroes, but himself only, the large equality to truth of a single mind, — as if, in the narrow walls of a human heart, the wide realm of truth, the world of morals, the tribunal by which the universe is judged, found room to exist.

Our people have this levity and complaisance, — they fear to offend, do not wish to be misunderstood; do not wish, of all things, to be in the minority. God and Nature are altogether sincere, and Art should be as sincere. It is not enough that the work should show a skilful hand, ingenious contrivance and admirable polish and finish; it should have a commanding motive in the time and condition in which it was made. We should see in it the great belief of the artist, which caused him to make it so as he did, and not otherwise; nothing frivolous, nothing that he might do or not do, as he chose, but somewhat that must be done then and there by him; he could not take his neck out of that yoke, and save his soul. And this design must shine

through the whole performance.[1] Sincerity is, in dangerous times, discovered to be an immeasurable advantage. I distrust all the legends of great accomplishments or performance of unprincipled men. Very little reliance must be put on the common stories that circulate of this great senator's or that great barrister's learning, their Greek, their varied literature. That ice won't bear. Reading! — do you mean that this senator or this lawyer, who stood by and allowed the passage of infamous laws, was a reader of Greek books? That is not the question; but to what purpose did they read? I allow them the merit of that reading which appears in their opinions, tastes, beliefs and practice. They read that they might know, did they not? Well, these men did not know. They blundered; they were utterly ignorant of that which every boy or girl of fifteen knows perfectly, — the rights of men and women. And this big-mouthed talker, among his dictionaries and Leipzig editions of Lysias, had lost his knowledge. But the President of the Bank nods to the President of the Insurance Office, and relates that at Virginia Springs this idol of the forum exhausted a trunkful of classic authors. There is always the previous question, How came you on that side? You are a very

elegant writer, but you can't write up what gravitates down.[1]

It is impossible to extricate oneself from the questions in which our age is involved. All of us have shared the new enthusiasm of country and of liberty which swept like a whirlwind through all souls at the outbreak of war, and brought, by ennobling us, an offset for its calamity.[2]

War, seeking for the roots of strength, comes upon the moral aspects at once. In quiet times, custom stifles this discussion as sentimental, and brings in the brazen devil, as by immemorial right. The war uplifted us into generous sentiments. War ennobles the age. We do not often have a moment of grandeur in these hurried, slipshod lives, but the behavior of the young men has taught us much. We will not again disparage America, now that we have seen what men it will bear. Battle, with the sword, has cut many a Gordian knot in twain which all the wit of East and West, of Northern and Border statesmen could not untie.

I learn with joy and with deep respect that this college has sent its full quota to the field. I learn with grief, but with honoring pain, that you have had your sufferers in the battle, and that the noble youth have returned wounded

and maimed. The times are dark, but heroic. The times develop the strength they need. Boys are heroes. Women have shown a tender patriotism and inexhaustible charity. And on each new threat of faction, the ballot of the people has been unexpectedly right. But the issues already appearing overpay the cost. Slavery is broken, and, if we use our advantage, irretrievably. For such a gain, to end once for all that pest of all our free institutions, one generation might well be sacrificed; perhaps it will; that this continent be purged and a new era of equal rights dawn on the universe. Who would not, if it could be made certain that the new morning of universal liberty should rise on our race by the perishing of one generation, — who would not consent to die?

X

THE SCHOLAR

For thought, and not praise,
Thought is the wages
For which I sell days,
Will gladly sell ages,
And willing grow old,
Deaf and dumb, blind and cold,
Melting matter into dreams,
Panoramas which I saw,
And whatever glows or seems
Into substance, into Law.

The sun and moon shall fall amain
Like sowers' seeds into his brain,
There quickened to be born again.

THE SCHOLAR

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON SOCIETIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, 28 JUNE, 1876.

GENTLEMEN: The Athenians took an oath, on a certain crisis in their affairs, to esteem wheat, the vine and the olive the bounds of Attica. The territory of scholars is yet larger. A stranger but yesterday to every person present, I find myself already at home, for the society of lettered men is a university which does not bound itself with the walls of one cloister or college, but gathers in the distant and solitary student into its strictest amity. Literary men gladly acknowledge these ties which find for the homeless and the stranger a welcome where least looked for. But in proportion as we are conversant with the laws of life, we have seen the like. We are used to these surprises. This is but one operation of a more general law. As in coming among strange faces we find that the love of letters makes us friends, so in strange thoughts, in the worldly habits which harden us, we find with some surprise that learning and truth and beauty have not let us go; that the spirit-

ual nature is too strong for us; that those excellent influences which men in all ages have called the *Muse*, or by some kindred name, come in to keep us warm and true; that the face of Nature remains irresistibly alluring. We have strayed from the territorial monuments of Attica, but here still are wheat and olives and the vine.

I do not now refer to that intellectual conscience which forms itself in tender natures, and gives us many twinges for our sloth and unfaithfulness: — the influence I speak of is of a higher strain. Stung by this intellectual conscience, we go to measure our tasks as scholars, and screw ourselves up to energy and fidelity, and our sadness is suddenly overshone by a sympathy of blessing. Beauty, the inspirer, the cheerful festal principle, the leader of gods and men, which draws by being beautiful, and not by considerations of advantage, comes in and puts a new face on the world.[1] I think the peculiar office of scholars in a careful and gloomy generation is to be (as the poets were called in the Middle Ages) Professors of the Joyous Science, detectors and delineators of occult symmetries and unpublished beauties; heralds of civility, nobility, learning and wisdom; affirmers of the one law,

yet as those who should affirm it in music and dancing;[1] expressors themselves of that firm and cheerful temper, infinitely removed from sadness, which reigns through the kingdoms of chemistry, vegetation and animal life. Every natural power exhilarates; a true talent delights the possessor first. A celebrated musician was wont to say, that men knew not how much more he delighted himself with his playing than he did others; for if they knew, his hearers would rather demand of him than give him a reward. The scholar is here to fill others with love and courage by confirming their trust in the love and wisdom which are at the heart of all things; to affirm noble sentiments; to hear them wherever spoken, out of the deeps of ages, out of the obscurities of barbarous life, and to republish them: — to untune nobody, but to draw all men after the truth, and to keep men spiritual and sweet.[2]

Language can hardly exaggerate the beatitude of the intellect flowing into the faculties. This is the power that makes the world incarnated in man, and laying again the beams of heaven and earth, setting the north and the south, and the stars in their places. Intellect is the science of metes and bounds; yet it sees no bound to the

eternal proceeding of law forth into nature. All the sciences are only new applications, each translatable into the other, of the one law which his mind is.

This, gentlemen, is the topic on which I shall speak, — the natural and permanent function of the Scholar, as he is no permissive or accidental appearance, but an organic agent in nature. He is here to be the beholder of the real; self-centred amidst the superficial; here to revere the dominion of a serene necessity and be its pupil and apprentice by tracing everything home to a cause; here to be sobered, not by the cares of life, as men say, no, but by the depth of his draughts of the cup of immortality.[1]

One is tempted to affirm the office and attributes of the scholar a little the more eagerly, because of a frequent perversity of the class itself. Men are ashamed of their intellect. The men committed by profession as well as by bias to study, the clergyman, the chemist, the astronomer, the metaphysician, the poet, talk hard and worldly, and share the infatuation of cities. The poet and the citizen perfectly agree in conversation on the wise life. The poet counsels his own son as if he were a merchant. The poet with poets betrays no amiable weakness. They

all chime in, and are as inexorable as bankers on the subject of real life. They have no toleration for literature; art is only a fine word for appearance in default of matter. And they sit white over their stoves, and talk themselves hoarse over the mischief of books and the effeminacy of book-makers. But at a single strain of a bugle out of a grove, or at the dashing among the stones of a brook from the hills; at the sound of some subtle word that falls from the lips of an imaginative person, or even at the reading in solitude of some moving image of a wise poet, this grave conclusion is blown out of memory; the sun shines, and the worlds roll to music, and the poet replaces all this cowardly Self-denial and God-denial of the literary class with the conviction that to one poetic success the world will surrender on its knees. Instantly he casts in his lot with the pearl-diver and the diamond-merchant. Like them he will joyfully lose days and months, and estates and credit, in the profound hope that one restoring, all rewarding, immense success will arrive at last, which will give him at one bound a universal dominion. And rightly; for if his wild prayers are granted, if he is to succeed, his achievement is the piercing of the brass heavens of use and

limitation, and letting in a beam of the pure eternity which burns up this limbo of shadows and chimeras in which we dwell. Yes, Nature is too strong for us; she will not be denied; she has balsams for our hurts, and hellebores for our insanities. She does not bandy words with us, but comes in with a new ravishing experience and makes the old time ridiculous. Every poet knows the unspeakable hope, and represents its audacity.[1]

I am not disposed to magnify temporary differences, but for the moment it appears as if in former times learning and intellectual accomplishments had secured to the possessor greater rank and authority. If this were only the reaction from excessive expectations from literature, now disappointed, it were a just censure. It was superstitious to exact too much from philosophers and the literary class. The Sophists, the Alexandrian grammarians, the wits of Queen Anne's, the philosophers and diffusion-societies have not much helped us. Granted, freely granted. Men run out of one superstition into an opposite superstition, and practical people in America give themselves wonderful airs. The cant of the time inquires superciliously after the new ideas; it believes that ideas do not lead to

the owning of stocks; they are perplexing and effeminating.

Young men, I warn you against the clamors of these self-praising frivolous activities, — against these busy-bodies; against irrational labor; against chattering, meddlesome, rich and official people. If their doing came to any good end! Action is legitimate and good; forever be it honored! right, original, private, necessary action, proceeding new from the heart of man, and going forth to beneficent and as yet incalculable ends. Yes; but not a petty fingering and running, a senseless repeating of yesterday's fingering and running; an acceptance of the method and frauds of other men; an overdoing and busy-ness which pretends to the honors of action, but resembles the twitches of St. Vitus. The action of these men I cannot respect, for they do not respect it themselves. They were better and more respectable abed and asleep. All the best of this class, all who have any insight or generosity of spirit are frequently disgusted, and fain to put it behind them.'

Gentlemen, I do not wish to check your impulses to action: I would not hinder you of one swing of your arm. I do not wish to see you effeminate gownsmen, taking hold of the

world with the tips of your fingers, or that life should be to you, as it is to many, optical, not practical. Far otherwise: I rather wish you to experiment boldly and give play to your energies, but not, if I could prevail with you, in conventional ways. I should wish your energy to run in works and emergencies growing out of your personal character. Nature will fast enough instruct you in the occasion and the need, and will bring to each of you the crowded hour, the great opportunity. Love, Rectitude, everlasting Fame, will come to each of you in loneliest places with their grand alternatives, and Honor watches to see whether you dare seize the palms.[1]

I have no quarrel with action, only I prefer no action to misaction, and I reject the abusive application of the term *practical* to those lower activities. Let us hear no more of the practical men, or I will tell you something of them, — this, namely, that the scholar finds in them unlooked-for acceptance of his most paradoxical experience. There is confession in their eyes, and if they parade their business and public importance, it is by way of apology and palliation for not being the students and obeyers of those diviner laws. Talk frankly with them and you

learn that you have little to tell them; that the Spirit of the Age has been before you with influences impossible to parry or resist. The dry-goods men, and the brokers, the lawyers and the manufacturers, are idealists, and only differ from the philosopher in the intensity of the charge. We are all contemporaries and bones of one body.

The shallow clamor against theoretic men comes from the weak. Able men may sometimes affect a contempt for thought, which no able man ever feels. For what alone in the history of this world interests all men in proportion as they are men? What but truth, and perpetual advance in knowledge of it, and brave obedience to it in right action? Every man or woman who can voluntarily or involuntarily give them any insight or suggestion on these secrets they will hearken after. The poet writes his verse on a scrap of paper, and instantly the desire and love of all mankind take charge of it, as if it were Holy Writ. What need has he to cross the sill of his door? Why need he meddle with politics? His idlest thought, his yesternight's dream is told already in the Senate. What the Genius whispered him at night he reported to the young men at dawn. He rides in

them, he traverses sea and land. The engineer in the locomotive is waiting for him; the steamboat is hissing at the wharf, and the wheels whirling to go.' 'T is wonderful, 't is almost scandalous, this extraordinary favoritism shown to poets. I do not mean to excuse it. I admit the enormous partiality. It only shows that such is the gulf between our perception and our painting, the eye is so wise, and the hand so clumsy, that all the human race have agreed to value a man according to his power of expression. For him arms, art, politics, trade, waited like menials, until the lord of the manor should arrive. Even the demonstrations of Nature for millenniums seem not to have attained their end, until this interpreter arrives. "I," said the great-hearted Kepler, "may well wait a hundred years for a reader, since God Almighty has waited six thousand years for an observer like myself."

Genius is a poor man and has no house, but see, this proud landlord who has built the palace and furnished it so delicately, opens it to him and beseeches him to make it honorable by entering there and eating bread. Where is the palace in England whose tenants are not too happy if it can make a home for Pope or Addi-

son or Swift or Burke or Canning or Tennyson? Or if wealth has humors and wishes to shake off the yoke and assert itself, — oh, by all means let it try! Will it build its fences very high, and make its Almacks too narrow for a wise man to enter?[1] Will it be independent? I incline to concede the isolation which it asks, that it may learn that it is not independent but parasitical.

There could always be traced, in the most barbarous tribes, and also in the most character-destroying civilization, some vestiges of a faith in genius, as in the exemption of a priesthood or bards or artists from taxes and tolls levied on other men; or in civic distinction; or in enthusiastic homage; or in hospitalities; as if men would signify their sense that genius and virtue should not pay money for house and land and bread, because they have a royal right in these and in all things, — a first mortgage that takes effect before the right of the present proprietor. For they are the First Good, of which Plato affirms that "all things are for its sake, and it is the cause of everything beautiful."

This reverence is the reëstablishment of natural order; for as the solidest rocks are made up of invisible gases, as the world is made of thickened light and arrested electricity, so men

know that ideas are the parents of men and things ; there was never anything that did not proceed from a thought. The scholar has a deep ideal interest in the moving show around him. He knew the motley system in its egg. We have — have we not ? — a real relation to markets and brokers and currency and coin. "Gold and silver," says one of the Platonists, "grow in the earth from the celestial gods, — an effluxion from them." The unmentionable dollar itself has at last a high origin in moral and metaphysical nature. Union Pacific stock is not quite private property, but the quality and essence of the universe is in that also. Have we less interest in ships or in shops, in manual work or in household affairs ; in any object of Nature, or in any handiwork of man ; in any relation of life or custom of society ? The scholar is to show, in each, identity and connexion ; he is to show its origin in the brain of man, and its secret history and issues. He is the attorney of the world, and can never be superfluous where so vast a variety of questions are ever coming up to be solved, and for ages.

I proceed to say that the allusions just now made to the extent of his duties, the manner in which every day's events will find him in

work, may show that his place is no sinecure. The scholar, when he comes, will be known by an energy that will animate all who see him. The labor of ambition and avarice will appear fumbling beside his. In the right hands, literature is not resorted to as a consolation, and by the broken and decayed, but as a decalogue. In this country we are fond of results and of short ways to them ; and most in this department. In our experiences, learning is not learned, nor is genius wise. The name of the Scholar is taken in vain. We who should be the channel of that unweariable Power which never sleeps, must give our diligence no holidays. Other men are planting and building, baking and tanning, running and sailing, heaving and carrying, each that he may peacefully execute the fine function by which they all are helped. Shall he play, whilst their eyes follow him from far with reverence, attributing to him the delving in great fields of thought, and conversing with supernatural allies? If he is not kindling his torch or collecting oil, he will fear to go by a workshop ; he will not dare to hear the music of a saw or plane ; the steam-engine will reprimand, the steam-pipe will hiss at him ; he cannot look a blacksmith in the eye , in the field he will be shamed by mowers

and reapers. The speculative man, the scholar, is the right hero. He is brave, because he sees the omnipotence of that which inspires him. Is there only one courage and one warfare? I cannot manage sword and rifle; can I not therefore be brave? I thought there were as many courages as men. Is an armed man the only hero? Is a man only the breech of a gun or the haft of a bowie-knife? Men of thought fail in fighting down malignity, because they wear other armor than their own. Let them decline henceforward foreign methods and foreign courages. Let them do that which they can do. Let them fight by their strength, not by their weakness. It seems to me that the thoughtful man needs no armor but this — concentration.' One thing is for him settled, that he is to come at his ends. He is not there to defend himself, but to deliver his message; if his voice is clear, then clearly; if husky, then huskily; if broken, he can at least scream; gag him, he can still write it; bruise, mutilate him, cut off his hands and feet, he can still crawl towards his object on his stumps. It is the corruption of our generation that men value a long life, and do not esteem life simply as a means of expressing a sentiment.

The great English patriot Algernon Sidney wrote to his father from his prison a little before his execution: "I have ever had in my mind that when God should cast me into such a condition as that I cannot save my life but by doing an indecent thing he shows me the time has come when I should resign it." Beauty belongs to the sentiment, and is always departing from those who depart out of that. The hero rises out of all comparison with contemporaries and with ages of men, because he disesteems old age, and lands, and money, and power, and will oppose all mankind at the call of that private and perfect Right and Beauty in which he lives.

Man is a torch borne in the wind. The ends I have hinted at made the scholar or spiritual man indispensable to the Republic or Commonwealth of Man. Nature could not leave herself without a seer and expounder. But he could not see or teach without organs. The same necessity then that would create him reappears in his splendid gifts. There is no power in the mind but in turn becomes an instrument. The descent of genius into talents is part of the natural order and history of the world. The incarnation must be. We cannot eat the granite nor drink hydrogen. They must be decom-

pounded and recompounded into corn and water before they can enter our flesh. There is a great deal of spiritual energy in the universe, but it is not palpable to us until we can make it up into man. There is plenty of air, but it is worth nothing until by gathering it into sails we can get it into shape and service to carry us and our cargo across the sea. Then it is paid for by hundreds of thousands of our money. Plenty of water also, sea full, sky full; who cares for it? But when we can get it where we want it, and in measured portions, on a mill-wheel, or boat-paddle, we will buy it with millions. There is plenty of wild azote and carbon unappropriated, but it is nought till we have made it up into loaves and soup. So we find it in higher relations. There is plenty of wild wrath, but it steads not until we can get it racked off, shall I say? and bottled into persons; a little pure, and not too much, to every head. How many young geniuses we have known, and none but ourselves will ever hear of them for want in them of a little talent!

Ah, gentlemen, I own I love talents and accomplishments; the feet and hands of genius. As Burke said, "it is not only our duty to make the right known, but to make it prevalent." So I delight to see the Godhead in distribution;

to see men that can come at their ends.[1] These shrewd faculties belong to man. I love to see them in play, and to see them trained: this memory carrying in its caves the pictures of all the past, and rendering them in the instant when they can serve the possessor; — the craft of mathematical combination, which carries a working-plan of the heavens and of the earth in a formula. I am apt to believe, with the Emperor Charles V., that "as many languages as a man knows, so many times is he a man." I like to see a man of that virtue that no obscurity or disguise can conceal, who wins all souls to his way of thinking. I delight in men adorned and weaponed with manlike arts, who could alone, or with a few like them, reproduce Europe and America, the result of our civilization.

It is excellent when the individual is ripened to that degree that he touches both the centre and the circumference, so that he is not only widely intelligent, but carries a council in his breast for the emergency of to-day; and alternates the contemplation of the fact in pure intellect, with the total conversion of the intellect into energy; Jove, and the thunderbolt launched from his hand. Perhaps I value power of achievement a little more because in America there

seems to be a certain indigence in this respect. I think there is no more intellectual people than ours. They are very apprehensive and curious. But there is a sterility of talent. These iron personalities, such as in Greece and Italy and once in England were formed to strike fear into kings and draw the eager service of thousands, rarely appear. We have general intelligence, but no Cyclop arms. A very little intellectual force makes a disproportionately great impression, and when one observes how eagerly our people entertain and discuss a new theory, whether home-born or imported, and how little thought operates how great an effect, one would draw a favorable inference as to their intellectual and spiritual tendencies. It seems as if two or three persons coming who should add to a high spiritual aim great constructive energy, would carry the country with them.

In making this claim of costly accomplishments for the scholar, I chiefly wish to infer the dignity of his work by the lustre of his appointments. He is not cheaply equipped. The universe was rifled to furnish him. He is to forge out of coarsest ores the sharpest weapons. But if the weapons are valued for themselves, if his talents assume an independence, and come to

work for ostentation, they cannot serve him. It was said of an eminent Frenchman, that "he was drowned in his talents." The peril of every fine faculty is the delight of playing with it for pride. Talent is commonly developed at the expense of character, and the greater it grows, the more is the mischief and misleading; so that presently all is wrong, talent is mistaken for genius, a dogma or system for truth, ambition for greatness, ingenuity for poetry, sensuality for art; and the young, coming up with innocent hope, and looking around them at education, at the professions and employments, at religious and literary teachers and teaching, — finding that nothing outside corresponds to the noble order in the soul, are confused, and become skeptical and forlorn.[1] Hope is taken from youth unless there be, by the grace of God, sufficient vigor in their instinct to say, "All is wrong and human invention. I declare anew from Heaven that truth exists new and beautiful and profitable forevermore." Order is heaven's first law. These gifts, these senses, these facilities are excellent as long as subordinated; all wasted and mischievous when they assume to lead and not obey. What is the use of strength or cunning or beauty, or musical voice, or birth, or

breeding, or money to a maniac? Yet society, in which we live, is subject to fits of frenzy; sometimes is for an age together a maniac, with birth, breeding, beauty, cunning, strength and money. And there is but one defence against this principle of chaos, and that is the principle of order, or brave return at all hours to an infinite common sense, to the mother-wit, to the wise instinct, to the pure intellect.

When a man begins to dedicate himself to a particular function, as his logical, or his remembering, or his oratorical, or his arithmetical skill, the advance of his character and genius pauses; he has run to the end of his line; seal the book; the development of that mind is arrested. The scholar is lost in the showman. Society is babyish, and is dazzled and deceived by the weapon, without inquiring into the cause for which it is drawn; like boys by the drums and colors of the troops.

The objection of men of the world to what they call the morbid intellectual tendency in our young men at present, is not a hostility to their truth, but to this, its shortcoming, that the idealistic views unfit their children for business in their sense, and do not qualify them for any complete life of a better kind. They threaten

the validity of contracts, but do not prevail so far as to establish the new kingdom which shall supersede contracts, oaths and property. "We have seen to weariness what you cannot do; now show us what you can and will do," asks the practical man, and with perfect reason.

We are not afraid of new truth, — of truth never, new, or old, — no, but of a counterfeit. Everybody hates imbecility and shortcoming, not new methods. The astronomer is not ridiculous inasmuch as he is an astronomer, but inasmuch as he is not an astronomer. Be that you are: be that cheerly and sovereignly. Plotinus makes no apologies, he says roundly, "the knowledge of the senses is truly ludicrous." "Body and its properties belong to the region of nonentity, as if more of body was necessarily produced where a defect of being happens in a greater degree." "Matter," says Plutarch, "is privation." Let the man of ideas at this hour be as direct, and as fully committed. Have you a thought in your heart? There was never such need of it as now. As we read the newspapers, as we see the effrontery with which money and power carry their ends and ride over honesty and good meaning, patriotism and religion seem to shriek like ghosts. We will not speak for them,

because to speak for them seems so weak and hopeless. We will hold fast our opinion and die in silence. But a true orator will make us feel that the states and kingdoms, the senators, lawyers and rich men are caterpillars' webs and caterpillars, when seen in the light of this despised and imbecile truth. Then we feel what cowards we have been. Truth alone is great. The orator too becomes a fool and a shadow before this light which lightens through him. It shines backward and forward, diminishes and annihilates everybody, and the prophet so gladly feels his personality lost in this victorious life. The spiritual nature exhibits itself so in its counteraction to any accumulation of material force. There is no mass that can be a counterweight for it. This makes one man good against mankind.[1] This is the secret of eloquence, for it is the end of eloquence in a half-hour's discourse, — perhaps by a few sentences, — to persuade a multitude of persons to renounce their opinions, and change the course of life. They go forth not the men they came in, but shriven, convicted and converted.

We have many revivals of religion. We have had once what was called the Revival of Letters. I wish to see a revival of the human mind: to

see men's sense of duty extend to the cherishing and use of their intellectual powers: their religion should go with their thought and hallow it. Whosoever looks with heed into his thoughts will find that our science of the mind has not got far. He will find there is somebody within him that knows more than he does, a certain dumb life in life; a simple wisdom behind all acquired wisdom; somewhat not educated or educable; not altered or alterable; a mother-wit which does not learn by experience or by books, but knew it all already; makes no progress, but was wise in youth as in age. More or less clouded it yet resides the same in all, saying *Ay*, *ay*, or *No*, *no* to every proposition. Yet its grand *Ay* and its grand *No* are more musical than all eloquence. Nobody has found the limit of its knowledge. Whatever object is brought before it is already well known to it. Its justice is perfect; its look is catholic and universal, its light ubiquitous like the sun. It does not put forth organs, it rests in presence: yet trusted and obeyed in happy natures it becomes active and salient, and makes new means for its great ends.

The scholar then is unfurnished who has only literary weapons. He ought to have as many talents as he can; memory, arithmetic, practical

power, manners, temper, lion-heart, are all good things, and if he has none of them he can still manage, if he have the main-mast, — if he is anything. But he must have the resource of resources, and be planted on necessity.[1] For the sure months are bringing him to an examination-day in which nothing is remitted or excused, and for which no tutor, no book, no lectures, and almost no preparation can be of the least avail. He will have to answer certain questions, which, I must plainly tell you, cannot be staved off. For all men, all women, Time, your country, your condition, the invisible world, are the interrogators: *Who are you? What do you? Can you obtain what you wish? Is there method in your consciousness? Can you see tendency in your life? Can you help any soul?*

Can he answer these questions? can he dispose of them? Happy if you can answer them mutely in the order and disposition of your life! Happy for more than yourself, a benefactor of men, if you can answer them in works of wisdom, art or poetry; bestowing on the general mind of men organic creations, to be the guidance and delight of all who know them. These questions speak to Genius, to that power which is underneath and greater than all talent, and which proceeds out

of the constitution of every man: to Genius, which is an emanation of that it tells of; whose private counsels are not tinged with selfishness, but are laws. Men of talent fill the eye with their pretension. They go out into some camp of their own, and noisily persuade society that this thing which they do is the needful cause of all men. They have talents for contention, and they nourish a small difference into a loud quarrel. But the world is wide, nobody will go there after to-morrow. The gun they have pointed can defend nothing but itself, nor itself any longer than the man is by. What is the use of artificial positions? But Genius has no taste for weaving sand, or for any trifling, but flings itself on real elemental things, which are powers, self-defensive; which first subsist, and then resist unweariably forevermore all that opposes. Genius has truth and clings to it, so that what it says and does is not in a by-road, visited only by curiosity, but on the great highways of Nature, which were before the Appian Way, and which all souls must travel. Genius delights only in statements which are themselves true, which attack and wound any who opposes them, whether he who brought them here remains here or not; — which are live men, and do daily declare fresh war against all falsehood

and custom, and will not let an offender go; which society cannot dispose of or forget, but which abide there and will not down at anybody's bidding, but stand frowning and formidable, and will and must be finally obeyed and done.

The scholar must be ready for bad weather, poverty, insult, weariness, repute of failure and many vexations. He must have a great patience, and ride at anchor and vanquish every enemy whom his small arms cannot reach, by the grand resistance of submission, of ceasing to do. He is to know that in the last resort he is not here to work, but to be worked upon. He is to eat insult, drink insult, be clothed and shod in insult until he has learned that this bitter bread and shameful dress is also wholesome and warm, is, in short, indifferent; is of the same chemistry as praise and fat living; that they also are disgrace and soreness to him who has them. I think much may be said to discourage and dissuade the young scholar from his career. Freely be that said. Dissuade all you can from the lists. Sift the wheat, frighten away the lighter souls. Let us keep only the heavy-armed. Let those come who cannot but come, and who see that there is no choice here, no advantage and no

disadvantage compared with other careers. For the great Necessity is our patron, who distributes sun and shade after immutable laws.[1]

Yes, he has his dark days, he has weakness, he has waitings, he has bad company, he is pelted by storms of cares, untuning cares, untuning company. Well, let him meet them. He has not consented to the frivolity, nor to the dispersion. The practical aim is forever higher than the literary aim. He shall not submit to degradation, but shall bear these crosses with what grace he can. He is still to decline how many glittering opportunities, and to retreat, and wait. So shall you find in this penury and absence of thought a purer splendor than ever clothed the exhibitions of wit. I invite you not to cheap joys, to the flutter of gratified vanity, to a sleek and rosy comfort; no, but to bareness, to power, to enthusiasm, to the mountain of vision, to true and natural supremacy, to the society of the great, and to love. Give me bareness and poverty so that I know them as the sure heralds of the Muse. Not in plenty, not in a thriving, well-to-do condition, she delighteth. He that would sacrifice at her altar must not leave a few flowers, an apple, or some symbolic gift. No; he must

relinquish orchards and gardens, prosperity and convenience; he may live on a heath without trees; sometimes hungry, and sometimes rheumatic with cold.[1] The fire retreats and concentrates within into a pure flame, pure as the stars to which it mounts.

But, gentlemen, there is plainly no end to these expansions. I have exhausted your patience, and I have only begun. I had perhaps wiselier adhered to my first purpose of confining my illustration to a single topic, but it is so much easier to say many things than to explain one. Well, you will see the drift of all my thoughts, this, namely — that the scholar must be much more than a scholar, that his ends give value to every means, but he is to subdue and keep down his methods; that his use of books is occasional, and infinitely subordinate; that he should read a little proudly, as one who knows the original, and cannot therefore very highly value the copy.[2] In like manner he is to hold lightly every tradition, every opinion, every person, out of his piety to that Eternal Spirit which dwells unexpressed with him. He shall think very highly of his destiny. He is here to know the secret of Genius; to become, not a reader of poetry, but Homer, Dante, Milton,

Shakspeare, Swedenborg, in the fountain, through that. If one man could impart his faith to another, if I could prevail to communicate the incommunicable mysteries, you should see the breadth of your realm; — that ever as you ascend your proper and native path, you receive the keys of Nature and history, and rise on the same stairs to science and to joy.[1]

XI

PLUTARCH

The soul
Shall have society of its own rank:
Be great, be true, and all the Scipios,
The Catos, the wise patriots of Rome,
Shall flock to you and tarry by your side
And comfort you with their high company.

PLUTARCH[1]

IT is remarkable that of an author so familiar as Plutarch, not only to scholars, but to all reading men, and whose history is so easily gathered from his works, no accurate memoir of his life, not even the dates of his birth and death, should have come down to us. Strange that the writer of so many illustrious biographies should wait so long for his own. It is agreed that he was born about the year 50 of the Christian era. He has been represented as having been the tutor of the Emperor Trajan, as dedicating one of his books to him, as living long in Rome in great esteem, as having received from Trajan the consular dignity, and as having been appointed by him the governor of Greece. He was a man whose real superiority had no need of these flatteries. Meantime, the simple truth is, that he was not the tutor of Trajan, that he dedicated no book to him, was not consul in Rome, nor governor of Greece; appears never to have been

[1] This paper was originally printed as an introduction to Plutarch's *Morals*, edited by Professor William W. Goodwin, and published, in 1871, by Messrs. Little, Brown & Co., through whose courtesy it is included in this edition.

in Rome but on two occasions, and then on business of the people of his native city, Chæronea; and though he found or made friends at Rome, and read lectures to some friends or scholars, he did not know or learn the Latin language there; with one or two doubtful exceptions, never quotes a Latin book; and though the contemporary, in his youth or in his old age, of Persius, Juvenal, Lucan and Seneca, of Quintilian, Martial, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Elder and the Younger, he does not cite them, and, in return, his name is never mentioned by any Roman writer. It would seem that the community of letters and of personal news was even more rare at that day than the want of printing, of railroads and telegraphs, would suggest to us.

But this neglect by his contemporaries has been compensated by an immense popularity in modern nations. Whilst his books were never known to the world in their own Greek tongue, it is curious that the Lives were translated and printed in Latin, thence into Italian, French and English, more than a century before the original Works were yet printed. For whilst the Lives were translated in Rome in 1470, and the Morals, part by part, soon after, the first printed edition of the Greek Works did

not appear until 1572. Hardly current in his own Greek, these found learned interpreters in the scholars of Germany, Spain and Italy. In France, in the middle of the most turbulent civil wars, Amyot's translation awakened general attention. His genial version of the Lives in 1559, of the Morals in 1572, had signal success.[1] King Henry IV. wrote to his wife, Marie de Medicis: "*Vive Dieu.* As God liveth, you could not have sent me anything which could be more agreeable than the news of the pleasure you have taken in this reading. Plutarch always delights me with a fresh novelty. To love him is to love me; for he has been long time the instructor of my youth. My good mother, to whom I owe all, and who would not wish, she said, to see her son an illustrious dunce, put this book into my hands almost when I was a child at the breast.[2] It has been like my conscience, and has whispered in my ear many good suggestions and maxims for my conduct and the government of my affairs." Still earlier, Rabelais cites him with due respect. Montaigne, in 1589, says: "We dunces had been lost, had not this book raised us out of the dirt. By this favor of his we dare now speak and write. The ladies are able to read to schoolmasters. 'T is our

breviary." Montesquieu drew from him his definition of law, and, in his *Pensées*, declares, "I am always charmed with Plutarch; in his writings are circumstances attached to persons, which give great pleasure;" and adds examples. Saint-Evremond read Plutarch to the great Condé under a tent. Rollin, so long the historian of antiquity for France, drew unhesitatingly his history from him. Voltaire honored him, and Rousseau acknowledged him as his master. In England, Sir Thomas North translated the Lives in 1579, and Holland the Morals in 1603, in time to be used by Shakspeare in his plays, and read by Bacon, Dryden and Cudworth.

Then, recently, there has been a remarkable revival, in France, in the taste for Plutarch and his contemporaries; led, we may say, by the eminent critic Sainte-Beuve. M. Octave Gréard, in a critical work on the Morals, has carefully corrected the popular legends and constructed from the works of Plutarch himself his true biography. M. Levéque has given an exposition of his moral philosophy, under the title of "A Physician of the Soul," in the Revue des Deux Mondes; and M. C. Martha, chapters on the genius of Marcus Aurelius, of Persius and

Lucretius, in the same journal; whilst M. Fustel de Coulanges has explored from its roots in the Aryan race, then in their Greek and Roman descendants, the primæval religion of the household.[1]

Plutarch occupies a unique place in literature as an encyclopædia of Greek and Roman antiquity. Whatever is eminent in fact or in fiction, in opinion, in character, in institutions, in science, — natural, moral or metaphysical, — or in memorable sayings, drew his attention and came to his pen with more or less fulness of record. He is, among prose writers, what Chaucer is among English poets, a repertory for those who want the story without searching for it at first hand, — a compend of all accepted traditions. And all this without any supreme intellectual gifts. He is not a profound mind; not a master in any science; not a lawgiver, like Lycurgus or Solon; not a metaphysician, like Parmenides, Plato or Aristotle; not the founder of any sect or community, like Pythagoras or Zeno; not a naturalist, like Pliny or Linnæus; not a leader of the mind of a generation, like Plato or Goethe. But if he had not the highest powers, he was yet a man of rare gifts. He had that universal sympathy with genius which makes

all its victories his own; though he never used verse, he had many qualities of the poet in the power of his imagination, the speed of his mental associations and his sharp, objective eyes. But what specially marks him, he is a chief example of the illumination of the intellect by the force of morals. Though the most amiable of boon companions, this generous religion gives him *aperçus* like Goethe's.

Plutarch was well-born, well-taught, well-conditioned; a self-respecting, amiable man, who knew how to better a good education by travels, by devotion to affairs private and public; a master of ancient culture, he read books with a just criticism; eminently social, he was a king in his own house, surrounded himself with select friends, and knew the high value of good conversation; and declares in a letter written to his wife that "he finds scarcely an erasure, as in a book well-written, in the happiness of his life."

The range of mind makes the glad writer. The reason of Plutarch's vast popularity is his humanity. A man of society, of affairs; upright, practical; a good son, husband, father and friend, — he has a taste for common life, and knows the court, the camp and the judgment-hall, but also the forge, farm, kitchen and cel-

lar, and every utensil and use, and with a wise man's or a poet's eye. Thought defends him from any degradation. He does not lose his way, for the attractions are from within, not from without. A poet in verse or prose must have a sensuous eye, but an intellectual co-perception. Plutarch's memory is full, and his horizon wide. Nothing touches man but he feels to be his; he is tolerant even of vice, if he finds it genial; enough a man of the world to give even the Devil his due, and would have hugged Robert Burns, when he cried: —

"O wad ye tak' a thought and mend!"

He is a philosopher with philosophers, a naturalist with naturalists, and sufficiently a mathematician to leave some of his readers, now and then, at a long distance behind him, or respectfully skipping to the next chapter.[1] But this scholastic omniscience of our author engages a new respect, since they hope he understands his own diagram.

He perpetually suggests Montaigne, who was the best reader he has ever found, though Montaigne excelled his master in the point and surprise of his sentences. Plutarch had a religion which Montaigne wanted, and which defends

him from wantonness; and though Plutarch is as plain-spoken, his moral sentiment is always pure. What better praise has any writer received than he whom Montaigne finds "frank in giving things, not words," dryly adding, "it vexes me that he is so exposed to the spoil of those that are conversant with him." It is one of the felicities of literary history, the tie which inseparably couples these two names across fourteen centuries. Montaigne, whilst he grasps Etienne de la Boèce with one hand, reaches back the other to Plutarch. These distant friendships charm us, and honor all the parties, and make the best example of the universal citizenship and fraternity of the human mind.

I do not know where to find a book — to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's — "so rammed with life," and this in chapters chiefly ethical, which are so prone to be heavy and sentimental. No poet could illustrate his thought with more novel or striking similes or happier anecdotes. His style is realistic, picturesque and varied; his sharp objective eyes seeing everything that moves, shines or threatens in nature or art, or thought or dreams. Indeed, twilights, shadows, omens and spectres have a charm for him. He believes in witchcraft and the evil eye, in demons

and ghosts, — but prefers, if you please, to talk of these in the morning. His vivacity and abundance never leave him to loiter or pound on an incident. I admire his rapid and crowded style, as if he had such store of anecdotes of his heroes that he is forced to suppress more than he recounts, in order to keep up with the hasting history.

His surprising merit is the genial facility with which he deals with his manifold topics. There is no trace of labor or pain. He gossips of heroes, philosophers and poets; of virtues and genius; of love and fate and empires. It is for his pleasure that he recites all that is best in his reading: he prattles history. But he is no courtier, and no Boswell: he is ever manly, far from fawning, and would be welcome to the sages and warriors he reports, as one having a native right to admire and recount these stirring deeds and speeches. I find him a better teacher of rhetoric than any modern. His superstitions are poetic, aspiring, affirmative. A poet might rhyme all day with hints drawn from Plutarch, page on page. No doubt, this superior suggestion for the modern reader owes much to the foreign air, the Greek wine, the religion and history of antique heroes. Thebes, Sparta, Athens and

Rome charm us away from the disgust of the passing hour. But his own cheerfulness and rude health are also magnetic. In his immense quotation and allusion we quickly cease to discriminate between what he quotes and what he invents. We sail on his memory into the ports of every nation, enter into every private property, and do not stop to discriminate owners, but give him the praise of all. 'T is all Plutarch, by right of eminent domain, and all property vests in this emperor.' This facility and abundance make the joy of his narrative, and he is read to the neglect of more careful historians. Yet he inspires a curiosity, sometimes makes a necessity, to read them. He disowns any attempt to rival Thucydides; but I suppose he has a hundred readers where Thucydides finds one, and Thucydides must often thank Plutarch for that one. He has preserved for us a multitude of precious sentences, in prose or verse, of authors whose books are lost; and these embalmed fragments, through his loving selection alone, have come to be proverbs of later mankind. I hope it is only my immense ignorance that makes me believe that they do not survive out of his pages, — not only Thespis, Polemos, Euphorion, Ariston, Evenus, etc., but

fragments of Menander and Pindar. At all events, it is in reading the fragments he has saved from lost authors that I have hailed another example of the sacred care which has unrolled in our times, and still searches and unrolls *papyri* from ruined libraries and buried cities, and has drawn attention to what an ancient might call the politeness of Fate, — we will say, more advisedly, the benign Providence which uses the violence of war, of earthquakes and changed water-courses, to save underground through barbarous ages the relics of ancient art, and thus allows us to witness the upturning of the alphabets of old races, and the deciphering of forgotten languages, so to complete the annals of the forefathers of Asia, Africa and Europe.

His delight in poetry makes him cite with joy the speech of Gorgias, " that the tragic poet who deceived was juster than he who deceived not, and he that was deceived was wiser than he who was not deceived." [1]

It is a consequence of this poetic trait in his mind, that I confess that, in reading him, I embrace the particulars, and carry a faint memory of the argument or general design of the chapter; but he is not less welcome, and he leaves the

reader with a relish and a necessity for completing his studies. Many examples might be cited of nervous expression and happy allusion, that indicate a poet and an orator, though he is not ambitious of these titles, and cleaves to the security of prose narrative, and only shows his intellectual sympathy with these; yet I cannot forbear to cite one or two sentences which none who reads them will forget. In treating of the style of the Pythian Oracle, he says: —

"Do you not observe, some one will say, what a grace there is in Sappho's measures, and how they delight and tickle the ears and fancies of the hearers? Whereas the Sibyl, with her frantic grimaces, uttering sentences altogether thoughtful and serious, neither fucused nor perfumed, continues her voice a thousand years through the favor of the Divinity that speaks within her."

Another gives an insight into his mystic tendencies: —

"Early this morning, asking Epaminondas about the manner of Lysis's burial, I found that Lysis had taught him as far as the incommunicable mysteries of our sect, and that the same Dæmon that waited on Lysis, presided over him, if I can guess at the pilot from the sailing of the

ship. The paths of life are large, but in few are men directed by the Dæmons. When Theanor had said this, he looked attentively on Epaminondas, as if he designed a fresh search into his nature and inclinations."

And here is his sentiment on superstition, somewhat condensed in Lord Bacon's citation of it: "I had rather a great deal that men should say, There was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat up his children as soon as they were born, as the poets speak of Saturn."

The chapter "On Fortune" should be read by poets, and other wise men; and the vigor of his pen appears in the chapter "Whether the Athenians were more Warlike or Learned," and in his attack upon Usurers.

There is, of course, a wide difference of time in the writing of these discourses, and so in their merit. Many of them are mere sketches or notes for chapters in preparation, which were never digested or finished. Many are notes for disputations in the lecture-room. His poor indignation against Herodotus was perhaps a youthful prize essay: it appeared to me captious and labored; or perhaps, at a rhetorician's school, the subject

of Herodotus being the lesson of the day, Plutarch was appointed by lot to take the adverse side.

The plain speaking of Plutarch, as of the ancient writers generally, coming from the habit of writing for one sex only, has a great gain for brevity, and, in our new tendencies of civilization, may tend to correct a false delicacy.

We are always interested in the man who treats the intellect well. We expect it from the philosopher, — from Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza and Kant; but we know that metaphysical studies in any but minds of large horizon and incessant inspiration have their dangers. One asks sometimes whether a metaphysician can treat the intellect well. The central fact is the superhuman intelligence, pouring into us from its unknown fountain, to be received with religious awe, and defended from any mixture of our will.[1] But this high Muse comes and goes; and the danger is that, when the Muse is wanting, the student is prone to supply its place with microscopic subtleties and logomachy. It is fatal to spiritual health to lose your admiration. "Let others wrangle," said St. Augustine; "I will wonder." Plato and Plotinus are enthusiasts, who honor the race; but the logic of the soph-

ists and materialists, whether Greek or French, fills us with disgust. Whilst we expect this awe and reverence of the spiritual power from the philosopher in his closet, we praise it in the man of the world; — the man who lives on quiet terms with existing institutions, yet indicates his perception of these high oracles; as do Plutarch, Montaigne, Hume and Goethe. These men lift themselves at once from the vulgar and are not the parasites of wealth. Perhaps they sometimes compromise, go out to dine, make and take compliments; but they keep open the source of wisdom and health. Plutarch is uniformly true to this centre. He had not lost his wonder. He is a pronounced idealist, who does not hesitate to say, like another Berkeley, "Matter is itself privation;" and again, "The Sun is the cause that all men are ignorant of Apollo, by sense withdrawing the rational intellect from that which is to that which appears." He thinks that "souls are naturally endowed with the faculty of prediction;" he delights in memory, with its miraculous power of resisting time. He thinks that "Alexander invaded Persia with greater assistance from Aristotle than from his father Philip." He thinks that "he who has ideas of his own is a bad judge of another man's,

it being true that the Eleans would be most proper judges of the Olympic games, were no Eleans gamesters." He says of Socrates that he endeavored to bring reason and things together, and make truth consist with sober sense. He wonders with Plato at that nail of pain and pleasure which fastens the body to the mind. The mathematics give him unspeakable pleasure, but he chiefly liked that proportion which teaches us to account that which is just, equal; and not that which is equal, just.

Of philosophy he is more interested in the results than in the method. He has a just instinct of the presence of a master, and prefers to sit as a scholar with Plato, than as a disputant; and true to his practical character, he wishes the philosopher not to hide in a corner, but to commend himself to men of public regards and ruling genius: "for, if he once possess such a man with principles of honor and religion, he takes a compendious method, by doing good to one, to oblige a great part of mankind." 'T is a temperance, not an eclecticism, which makes him adverse to the severe Stoic, or the Gymnosophist, or Diogenes, or any other extremist. That vice of theirs shall not hinder him from citing any good word they chance to drop. He is an eclectic

in such sense as Montaigne was, — willing to be an expectant, not a dogmatist.

In many of these chapters it is easy to infer the relation between the Greek philosophers and those who came to them for instruction. This teaching was no play nor routine, but strict, sincere and affectionate. The part of each of the class is as important as that of the master. They are like the baseball players, to whom the pitcher, the bat, the catcher and the scout are equally important. And Plutarch thought, with Ariston, "that neither a bath nor a lecture served any purpose, unless they were purgative." Plutarch has such a keen pleasure in realities that he has none in verbal disputes; he is impatient of sophistry, and despises the Epicharmian disputations: as, that he who ran in debt yesterday owes nothing to-day, as being another man; so, he that was yesterday invited to supper, the next night comes an unbidden guest, for that he is quite another person.

Except as historical curiosities, little can be said in behalf of the scientific value of the Opinions of the Philosophers, the Questions and the Symposiacs. They are, for the most part, very crude opinions; many of them so puerile that one would believe that Plutarch in

his haste adopted the notes of his younger auditors, some of them jocosely misreporting the dogma of the professor, who laid them aside as *memoranda* for future revision, which he never gave, and they were posthumously published. Now and then there are hints of superior science. You may cull from this record of barbarous guesses of shepherds and travellers, statements that are predictions of facts established in modern science. Usually, when Thales, Anaximenes or Anaximander are quoted, it is really a good judgment. The explanation of the rainbow, of the floods of the Nile, and of the *remora*, etc., are just; and the bad guesses are not worse than many of Lord Bacon's.

His Natural History is that of a lover and poet, and not of a physicist.[1] His humanity stooped affectionately to trace the virtues which he loved in the animals also. "Knowing and not knowing is the affirmative or negative of the dog; knowing you is to be your friend; not knowing you, your enemy." He quotes Thucydides's saying that "not the desire of honor only never grows old, but much less also the inclination to society and affection to the State, which continue even in ants and bees to the very last."

But, though curious in the questions of the

schools on the nature and genesis of things, his extreme interest in every trait of character, and his broad humanity, lead him constantly to Morals, to the study of the Beautiful and Good. Hence his love of heroes, his rule of life, and his clear convictions of the high destiny of the soul. La Harpe said that " Plutarch is the genius the most naturally moral that ever existed."

'T is almost inevitable to compare Plutarch with Seneca, who, born fifty years earlier, was for many years his contemporary, though they never met, and their writings were perhaps unknown to each other. Plutarch is genial, with an endless interest in all human and divine things; Seneca, a professional philosopher, a writer of sentences, and, though he keep a sublime path, is less interesting, because less humane; and when we have shut his book, we forget to open it again. There is a certain violence in his opinions, and want of sweetness. He lacks the sympathy of Plutarch. He is tiresome through perpetual didactics. He is not happily living. Cannot the simple lover of truth enjoy the virtues of those he meets, and the virtues suggested by them, so to find himself at some time purely contented? Seneca was still more a man of the world than Plutarch; and by his

conversation with the Court of Nero, and his own skill, like Voltaire's, of living with men of business and emulating their address in affairs by great accumulation of his own property, learned to temper his philosophy with facts. He ventured far — apparently too far — for so keen a conscience as he inly had. Yet we owe to that wonderful moralist illustrious maxims; as if the scarlet vices of the times of Nero had the natural effect of driving virtue to its loftiest antagonisms. "Seneca," says L'Estrange, "was a pagan Christian, and is very good reading for our Christian pagans." He was Buddhist in his cold abstract virtue, with a certain impassibility beyond humanity. He called pity, "that fault of narrow souls." Yet what noble words we owe to him: "God divided man into men, that they might help each other;" and again, "The good man differs from God in nothing but duration." His thoughts are excellent, if only he had the right to say them. Plutarch, meantime, with every virtue under heaven, thought it the top of wisdom to philosophize yet not appear to do it, and to reach in mirth the same ends which the most serious are proposing.

Plutarch thought "truth to be the greatest good that man can receive, and the goodliest

blessing that God can give." "When you are persuaded in your mind that you cannot either offer or perform anything more agreeable to the gods than the entertaining a right notion of them, you will then avoid superstition as a no less evil than atheism." He cites Euripides to affirm, "If gods do aught dishonest, they are no gods," and the memorable words of Antigone, in Sophocles, concerning the moral sentiment: —

> "For neither now nor yesterday began
> These thoughts, which have been ever, nor yet can
> A man be found who their first entrance knew."

His faith in the immortality of the soul is another measure of his deep humanity. He reminds his friends that the Delphic oracles have given several answers the same in substance as that formerly given to Corax the Naxian: —

> "It sounds profane impiety
> To teach that human souls e'er die."

He believes that the doctrine of the Divine Providence, and that of the immortality of the soul, rest on one and the same basis. He thinks it impossible either that a man beloved of the gods should not be happy, or that a wise and just man should not be beloved of the gods.

To him the Epicureans are hateful, who held that the soul perishes when it is separated from the body. "The soul, incapable of death, suffers in the same manner in the body, as birds that are kept in a cage." He believes "that the souls of infants pass immediately into a better and more divine state."

I can easily believe that an anxious soul may find in Plutarch's chapter called "Pleasure not attainable by Epicurus," and his "Letter to his Wife Timoxena," a more sweet and reassuring argument on the immortality than in the Phædo of Plato; for Plutarch always addresses the question on the human side, and not on the metaphysical; as Walter Scott took hold of boys and young men, in England and America, and through them of their fathers. His grand perceptions of duty lead him to his stern delight in heroism; a stoic resistance to low indulgence; to a fight with fortune; a regard for truth; his love of Sparta, and of heroes like Aristides, Phocion and Cato. He insists that the highest good is in action. He thinks that the inhabitants of Asia came to be vassals to one, only for not having been able to pronounce one syllable; which is, No. So keen is his sense of allegiance to right reason, that he makes a fight against

Fortune whenever she is named. At Rome he thinks her wings were clipped: she stood no longer on a ball, but on a cube as large as Italy. He thinks it was by superior virtue that Alexander won his battles in Asia and Africa, and the Greeks theirs against Persia.

But this Stoic in his fight with Fortune, with vices, effeminacy and indolence, is gentle as a woman when other strings are touched. He is the most amiable of men. "To erect a trophy in the soul against anger is that which none but a great and victorious puissance is able to achieve." — "Anger turns the mind out of doors, and bolts the door." He has a tenderness almost to tears when he writes on "Friendship," on the "Training of Children" and on the "Love of Brothers." "There is no treasure," he says, "parents can give to their children, like a brother; 't is a friend given by nature, a gift nothing can supply; once lost, not to be replaced. The Arcadian prophet, of whom Herodotus speaks, was obliged to make a wooden foot in place of that which had been chopped off. A brother, embroiled with his brother, going to seek in the street a stranger who can take his place, resembles him who will cut off his foot to give himself one of wood."

All his judgments are noble. He thought, with Epicurus, that it is more delightful to do than to receive a kindness. "This courteous, gentle and benign disposition and behavior is not so acceptable, so obliging or delightful to any of those with whom we converse, as it is to those who have it." There is really no limit to his bounty: "It would be generous to lend our eyes and ears, nay, if possible, our reason and fortitude to others, whilst we are idle or asleep." His excessive and fanciful humanity reminds one of Charles Lamb, whilst it much exceeds him. When the guests are gone, he "would leave one lamp burning, only as a sign of the respect he bore to fires, for nothing so resembles an animal as fire. It is moved and nourished by itself, and by its brightness, like the soul, discovers and makes everything apparent, and in its quenching shows some power that seems to proceed from a vital principle, for it makes a noise and resists, like an animal dying, or violently slaughtered;" and he praises the Romans, who, when the feast was over, "dealt well with the lamps, and did not take away the nourishment they had given, but permitted them to live and shine by it."

I can almost regret that the learned editor of

the present republication has not preserved, if only as a piece of history, the preface of Mr. Morgan, the editor and in part writer of this Translation of 1718. In his dedication of the work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, he tells the Primate that "Plutarch was the wisest man of his age, and, if he had been a Christian, one of the best too; *but it was his severe fate to flourish in those days of ignorance, which, 't is a favorable opinion to hope that the Almighty will sometime wink at; that our souls may be with these philosophers together in the same state of bliss.*" The puzzle in the worthy translator's mind between his theology and his reason well reappears in the puzzle of his sentence.

I know that the chapter of "Apothegms of Noble Commanders" is rejected by some critics as not a genuine work of Plutarch; but the matter is good, and is so agreeable to his taste and genius, that if he had found it, he would have adopted it. If he did not compile the piece, many, perhaps most of the anecdotes were already scattered in his works. If I do not lament that a work not his should be ascribed to him, I regret that he should have suffered such destruction of his own. What a trilogy is lost to

mankind in his Lives of Scipio, Epaminondas, and Pindar.[1]

His delight in magnanimity and self-sacrifice has made his books, like Homer's Iliad, a bible for heroes; and wherever the Cid is relished, the legends of Arthur, Saxon Alfred and Richard the Lion-hearted, Robert Bruce, Sydney, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Cromwell, Nelson, Bonaparte, and Walter Scott's Chronicles in prose or verse, — there will Plutarch, who told the story of Leonidas, of Agesilaus, of Aristides, Phocion, Themistocles, Demosthenes, Epaminondas, Cæsar, Cato and the rest, sit as the bestower of the crown of noble knighthood, and laureate of the ancient world.

The chapters "On the Fortune of Alexander," in the Morals, are an important appendix to the portrait in the Lives. The union in Alexander of sublime courage with the refinement of his pure tastes, making him the carrier of civilization into the East, are in the spirit of the ideal hero, and endeared him to Plutarch. That prince kept Homer's poems not only for himself under his pillow in his tent, but carried these for the delight of the Persian youth, and made them acquainted also with the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles. He persuaded the

Sogdians not to kill, but to cherish their aged parents; the Persians to reverence, not marry their mothers; the Scythians to bury and not eat their dead parents. What a fruit and fitting monument of his best days was his city Alexandria, to be the birthplace or home of Plotinus, St. Augustine, Synesius, Posidonius, Ammonius, Jamblichus, Porphyry, Origen, Aratus, Apollonius and Apuleius.

If Plutarch delighted in heroes, and held the balance between the severe Stoic and the indulgent Epicurean, his humanity shines not less in his intercourse with his personal friends. He was a genial host and guest, and delighted in bringing chosen companions to the supper-table. He knew the laws of conversation and the laws of good-fellowship quite as well as Horace, and has set them down with such candor and grace as to make them good reading to-day. The guests not invited to a private board by the entertainer, but introduced by a guest as his companions, the Greek called *shadows;* and the question is debated whether it was civil to bring them, and he treats it candidly, but concludes: "Therefore, when I make an invitation, since it is hard to break the custom of the place, I give my guests leave to bring shadows; but when I

myself am invited as a shadow, I assure you I refuse to go." ' He has an objection to the introduction of music at feasts. He thought it wonderful that a man having a muse in his own breast, and all the pleasantness that would fit an entertainment, would have pipes and harps play, and by that external noise destroy all the sweetness that was proper and his own.

I cannot close these notes without expressing my sense of the valuable service which the Editor has rendered to his Author and to his readers. Professor Goodwin is a silent benefactor to the book, wherever I have compared the editions. I did not know how careless and vicious in parts the old book was, until, in recent reading of the old text, on coming on anything absurd or unintelligible, I referred to the new text and found a clear and accurate statement in its place. It is the vindication of Plutarch. The correction is not only of names of authors and of places grossly altered or misspelled, but of unpardonable liberties taken by the translators, whether from negligence or freak.

One proof of Plutarch's skill as a writer is that he bears translation so well. In spite of its carelessness and manifold faults, which, I doubt not, have tried the patience of its present learned

editor and corrector, I yet confess my enjoyment of this old version, for its vigorous English style. The work of some forty or fifty University men, some of them imperfect in their Greek, it is a monument of the English language at a period of singular vigor and freedom of style. I hope the Commission of the Philological Society in London, charged with the duty of preparing a Critical Dictionary, will not overlook these volumes, which show the wealth of their tongue to greater advantage than many books of more renown as models. It runs through the whole scale of conversation in the street, the market, the coffee-house, the law courts, the palace, the college and the church. There are, no doubt, many vulgar phrases, and many blunders of the printer; but it is the speech of business and conversation, and in every tone, from lowest to highest.

We owe to these translators many sharp perceptions of the wit and humor of their author, sometimes even to the adding of the point. I notice one, which, although the translator has justified his rendering in a note, the severer criticism of the Editor has not retained. "Were there not a sun, we might, for all the other stars, pass our days in the Reverend Dark, as Hera-

clitus calls it." [1] I find a humor in the phrase which might well excuse its doubtful accuracy.

It is a service to our Republic to publish a book that can force ambitious young men, before they mount the platform of the county conventions, to read the "Laconic Apothegms" and the "Apothegms of Great Commanders." If we could keep the secret, and communicate it only to a few chosen aspirants, we might confide that, by this noble infiltration, they would easily carry the victory over all competitors. But, as it was the desire of these old patriots to fill with their majestic spirit all Sparta or Rome, and not a few leaders only, we hasten to offer them to the American people.

Plutarch's popularity will return in rapid cycles. If over-read in this decade, so that his anecdotes and opinions become commonplace, and to-day's novelties are sought for variety, his sterling values will presently recall the eye and thought of the best minds, and his books will be reprinted and read anew by coming generations. And thus Plutarch will be perpetually rediscovered from time to time as long as books last.[2]

XII

HISTORIC NOTES OF LIFE AND LETTERS IN NEW ENGLAND

"Of old things all are over old,
Of good things none are good enough; —
We 'll show that we can help to frame
A world of other stuff."

"Rob Roy's Grave," WORDSWORTH.

For Joy and Beauty planted it
With faerie gardens cheered,
And boding Fancy haunted it
With men and women weird.

LIFE AND LETTERS IN NEW ENGLAND

THE ancient manners were giving way. There grew a certain tenderness on the people, not before remarked. Children had been repressed and kept in the background; now they were considered, cosseted and pampered. I recall the remark of a witty physician who remembered the hardships of his own youth; he said, "It was a misfortune to have been born when children were nothing, and to live till men were nothing."

There are always two parties, the party of the Past and the party of the Future; the Establishment and the Movement. At times the resistance is reanimated, the schism runs under the world and appears in Literature, Philosophy, Church, State and social customs. It is not easy to date these eras of activity with any precision, but in this region one made itself remarked, say in 1820 and the twenty years following.

It seemed a war between intellect and affection; a crack in Nature, which split every church in Christendom into Papal and Protestant; Calvinism into Old and New schools; Quakerism

into Old and New; brought new divisions in politics; as the new conscience touching temperance and slavery. The key to the period appeared to be that the mind had become aware of itself. Men grew reflective and intellectual. There was a new consciousness. The former generations acted under the belief that a shining social prosperity was the beatitude of man, and sacrificed uniformly the citizen to the State. The modern mind believed that the nation existed for the individual, for the guardianship and education of every man. This idea, roughly written in revolutions and national movements, in the mind of the philosopher had far more precision; the individual is the world.

This perception is a sword such as was never drawn before. It divides and detaches bone and marrow, soul and body, yea, almost the man from himself. It is the age of severance, of dissociation, of freedom, of analysis, of detachment. Every man for himself. The public speaker disclaims speaking for any other; he answers only for himself. The social sentiments are weak; the sentiment of patriotism is weak; veneration is low; the natural affections feebler than they were. People grow philosophical about native land and parents and relations. There is an uni-

versal resistance to ties and ligaments once supposed essential to civil society. The new race is stiff, heady and rebellious ; they are fanatics in freedom ; they hate tolls, taxes, turnpikes, banks, hierarchies, governors, yea, almost laws. They have a neck of unspeakable tenderness ; it winces at a hair. They rebel against theological as against political dogmas ; against mediation, or saints, or any nobility in the unseen.'

The age tends to solitude. The association of the time is accidental and momentary and hypocritical, the detachment intrinsic and progressive. The association is for power, merely, — for means ; the end being the enlargement and independency of the individual. Anciently, society was in the course of things. There was a Sacred Band, a Theban Phalanx. There can be none now. College classes, military corps, or trades-unions may fancy themselves indissoluble for a moment, over their wine; but it is a painted hoop, and has no girth. The age of arithmetic and of criticism has set in. The structures of old faith in every department of society a few centuries have sufficed to destroy. Astrology, magic, palmistry, are long gone. The very last ghost is laid. Demonology is on its last legs. Prerogative, government, goes to pieces day by day.

Europe is strewn with wrecks; a constitution once a week. In social manners and morals the revolution is just as evident. In the law courts, crimes of fraud have taken the place of crimes of force. The stockholder has stepped into the place of the warlike baron. The nobles shall not any longer, as feudal lords, have power of life and death over the churls, but now, in another shape, as capitalists, shall in all love and peace eat them up as before. Nay, government itself becomes the resort of those whom government was invented to restrain. "Are there any brigands on the road?" inquired the traveller in France. "Oh, no, set your heart at rest on that point," said the landlord; "what should these fellows keep the highway for, when they can rob just as effectually, and much more at their ease, in the bureaus of office?"

In literature the effect appeared in the decided tendency of criticism. The most remarkable literary work of the age has for its hero and subject precisely this introversion: I mean the poem of Faust. In philosophy, Immanuel Kant has made the best catalogue of the human faculties and the best analysis of the mind. Hegel also, especially.[1] In science the French *savant*, exact, pitiless, with barometer, crucible, chemic test

and calculus in hand, travels into all nooks and islands, to weigh, to analyze and report. And chemistry, which is the analysis of matter, has taught us that we eat gas, drink gas, tread on gas, and are gas. The same decomposition has changed the whole face of physics; the like in all arts, modes. Authority falls, in Church, College, Courts of Law, Faculties, Medicine.' Experiment is credible; antiquity is grown ridiculous.

It marked itself by a certain predominance of the intellect in the balance of powers. The warm swart Earth-spirit which made the strength of past ages, mightier than it knew, with instincts instead of science, like a mother yielding food from her own breast instead of preparing it through chemic and culinary skill, — warm negro ages of sentiment and vegetation, — all gone; another hour had struck and other forms arose. Instead of the social existence which all shared, was now separation. Every one for himself; driven to find all his resources, hopes, rewards, society and deity within himself.

The young men were born with knives in their brain, a tendency to introversion, self-dissection, anatomizing of motives. The popular religion of our fathers had received many severe

shocks from the new times; from the Arminians, which was the current name of the backsliders from Calvinism, sixty years ago; then from the English philosophic theologians, Hartley and Priestley and Belsham, the followers of Locke; and then I should say much later from the slow but extraordinary influence of Swedenborg; a man of prodigious mind, though as I think tainted with a certain suspicion of insanity, and therefore generally disowned, but exerting a singular power over an important intellectual class;[1] then the powerful influence of the genius and character of Dr. Channing.

Germany had created criticism in vain for us until 1820, when Edward Everett returned from his five years in Europe, and brought to Cambridge his rich results, which no one was so fitted by natural grace and the splendor of his rhetoric to introduce and recommend. He made us for the first time acquainted with Wolff's theory of the Homeric writings, with the criticism of Heyne. The novelty of the learning lost nothing in the skill and genius of his relation, and the rudest undergraduate found a new morning opened to him in the lecture-room of Harvard Hall.

There was an influence on the young people

from the genius of Everett which was almost comparable to that of Pericles in Athens. He had an inspiration which did not go beyond his head, but which made him the master of elegance. If any of my readers were at that period in Boston or Cambridge, they will easily remember his radiant beauty of person, of a classic style, his heavy large eye, marble lids, which gave the impression of mass which the slightness of his form needed; sculptured lips; a voice of such rich tones, such precise and perfect utterance, that, although slightly nasal, it was the most mellow and beautiful and correct of all the instruments of the time. The word that he spoke, in the manner in which he spoke it, became current and classical in New England. He had a great talent for collecting facts, and for bringing those he had to bear with ingenious felicity on the topic of the moment. Let him rise to speak on what occasion soever, a fact had always just transpired which composed, with some other fact well known to the audience, the most pregnant and happy coincidence. It was remarked that for a man who threw out so many facts he was seldom convicted of a blunder. He had a good deal of special learning, and all his learning was available for purposes of the hour.

It was all new learning, that wonderfully took and stimulated the young men. It was so coldly and weightily communicated from so commanding a platform, as if in the consciousness and consideration of all history and all learning, — adorned with so many simple and austere beauties of expression, and enriched with so many excellent digressions and significant quotations, that, though nothing could be conceived beforehand less attractive or indeed less fit for green boys from Connecticut, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, with their unripe Latin and Greek reading, than exegetical discourses in the style of Voss and Wolff and Ruhnken, on the Orphic and Ante-Homeric remains, — yet this learning instantly took the highest place to our imagination in our unoccupied American Parnassus. All his auditors felt the extreme beauty and dignity of the manner, and even the coarsest were contented to go punctually to listen, for the manner, when they had found out that the subject-matter was not for them. In the lecture-room, he abstained from all ornament, and pleased himself with the play of detailing erudition in a style of perfect simplicity. In the pulpit (for he was then a clergyman) he made amends to himself and his auditor for the self-

denial of the professor's chair, and, with an infantine simplicity still, of manner, he gave the reins to his florid, quaint and affluent fancy.[1]

Then was exhibited all the richness of a rhetoric which we have never seen rivalled in this country. Wonderful how memorable were words made which were only pleasing pictures, and covered no new or valid thoughts. He abounded in sentences, in wit, in satire, in splendid allusion, in quotation impossible to forget, in daring imagery, in parable and even in a sort of defying experiment of his own wit and skill in giving an oracular weight to Hebrew or Rabbinical words; — feats which no man could better accomplish, such was his self-command and the security of his manner. All his speech was music, and with such variety and invention that the ear was never tired. Especially beautiful were his poetic quotations. He delighted in quoting Milton, and with such sweet modulation that he seemed to give as much beauty as he borrowed; and whatever he has quoted will be remembered by any who heard him, with inseparable association with his voice and genius. He had nothing in common with vulgarity and infirmity, but, speaking, walking, sitting, was as much aloof and uncommon as a star. The

smallest anecdote of his behavior or conversation was eagerly caught and repeated, and every young scholar could recite brilliant sentences from his sermons, with mimicry, good or bad, of his voice. This influence went much farther, for he who was heard with such throbbing hearts and sparkling eyes in the lighted and crowded churches, did not let go his hearers when the church was dismissed, but the bright image of that eloquent form followed the boy home to his bed-chamber; and not a sentence was written in academic exercises, not a declamation attempted in the college chapel, but showed the omnipresence of his genius to youthful heads. This made every youth his defender, and boys filled their mouths with arguments to prove that the orator had a heart. This was a triumph of Rhetoric. It was not the intellectual or the moral principles which he had to teach. It was not thoughts. When Massachusetts was full of his fame it was not contended that he had thrown any truths into circulation. But his power lay in the magic of form; it was in the graces of manner; in a new perception of Grecian beauty, to which he had opened our eyes. There was that finish about this person which is about women, and which distinguishes every piece of genius

from the works of talent, — that these last are more or less matured in every degree of completeness according to the time bestowed on them, but works of genius in their first and slightest form are still wholes. In every public discourse there was nothing left for the indulgence of his hearer, no marks of late hours and anxious, unfinished study, but the goddess of grace had breathed on the work a last fragrancy and glitter.

By a series of lectures largely and fashionably attended for two winters in Boston he made a beginning of popular literary and miscellaneous lecturing, which in that region at least had important results. It is acquiring greater importance every day, and becoming a national institution. I am quite certain that this purely literary influence was of the first importance to the American mind.[1]

In the pulpit Dr. Frothingham, an excellent classical and German scholar, had already made us acquainted, if prudently, with the genius of Eichhorn's theologic criticism. And Professor Norton a little later gave form and method to the like studies in the then infant Divinity School.[2] But I think the paramount source of the religious revolution was Modern Science;

beginning with Copernicus, who destroyed the pagan fictions of the Church, by showing mankind that the earth on which we live was not the centre of the Universe, around which the sun and stars revolved every day, and thus fitted to be the platform on which the Drama of the Divine Judgment was played before the assembled Angels of Heaven, — "the scaffold of the divine vengeance" Saurin called it, — but a little scrap of a planet, rushing round the sun in our system, which in turn was too minute to be seen at the distance of many stars which we behold. Astronomy taught us our insignificance in Nature; showed that our sacred as our profane history had been written in gross ignorance of the laws, which were far grander than we knew; and compelled a certain extension and uplifting of our views of the Deity and his Providence. This correction of our superstitions was confirmed by the new science of Geology, and the whole train of discoveries in every department. But we presently saw also that the religious nature in man was not affected by these errors in his understanding.[1] The religious sentiment made nothing of bulk or size, or far or near; triumphed over time as well as space; and every lesson of humility, or justice, or charity, which

the old ignorant saints had taught him, was still forever true.

Whether from these influences, or whether by a reaction of the general mind against the too formal science, religion and social life of the earlier period, — there was, in the first quarter of our nineteenth century, a certain sharpness of criticism, an eagerness for reform, which showed itself in every quarter. It appeared in the popularity of Lavater's Physiognomy, now almost forgotten. Gall and Spurzheim's Phrenology laid a rough hand on the mysteries of animal and spiritual nature, dragging down every sacred secret to a street show. The attempt was coarse and odious to scientific men, but had a certain truth in it; it felt connection where the professors denied it, and was a leading to a truth which had not yet been announced. On the heels of this intruder came Mesmerism, which broke into the inmost shrines, attempted the explanation of miracle and prophecy, as well as of creation. What could be more revolting to the contemplative philosopher! But a certain success attended it, against all expectation. It was human, it was genial, it affirmed unity and connection between remote points, and as such was excellent criticism on the narrow and dead classification of what

passed for science; and the joy with which it was greeted was an instinct of the people which no true philosopher would fail to profit by. But while society remained in doubt between the indignation of the old school and the audacity of the new, a higher note sounded. Unexpected aid from high quarters came to iconoclasts. The German poet Goethe revolted against the science of the day, against French and English science, declared war against the great name of Newton, proposed his own new and simple optics; in Botany, his simple theory of metamorphosis; — the eye of a leaf is all; every part of the plant from root to fruit is only a modified leaf, the branch of a tree is nothing but a leaf whose serratures have become twigs. He extended this into anatomy and animal life, and his views were accepted. The revolt became a revolution. Schelling and Oken introduced their ideal natural philosophy, Hegel his metaphysics, and extended it to Civil History.

The result in literature and the general mind was a return to law; in science, in politics, in social life; as distinguished from the profligate manners and politics of earlier times. The age was moral. Every immorality is a departure from nature, and is punished by natural loss and

deformity. The popularity of Combe's Constitution of Man; the humanity which was the aim of all the multitudinous works of Dickens; the tendency even of Punch's caricature, was all on the side of the people. There was a breath of new air, much vague expectation, a consciousness of power not yet finding its determinate aim.

I attribute much importance to two papers of Dr. Channing, one on Milton and one on Napoleon, which were the first specimens in this country of that large criticism which in England had given power and fame to the Edinburgh Review. They were widely read, and of course immediately fruitful in provoking emulation which lifted the style of Journalism. Dr. Channing, whilst he lived, was the star of the American Church, and we then thought, if we do not still think, that he left no successor in the pulpit. He could never be reported, for his eye and voice could not be printed, and his discourses lose their best in losing them. He was made for the public; his cold temperament made him the most unprofitable private companion; but all America would have been impoverished in wanting him. We could not then spare a single word he uttered in public, not so

much as the reading a lesson in Scripture, or a hymn, and it is curious that his printed writings are almost a history of the times; as there was no great public interest, political, literary or even economical (for he wrote on the Tariff), on which he did not leave some printed record of his brave and thoughtful opinion. A poor little invalid all his life, he is yet one of those men who vindicate the power of the American race to produce greatness.[1]

Dr. Channing took counsel in 1840 with George Ripley, to the point whether it were possible to bring cultivated, thoughtful people together, and make society that deserved the name. He had earlier talked with Dr. John Collins Warren on the like purpose, who admitted the wisdom of the design and undertook to aid him in making the experiment. Dr. Channing repaired to Dr. Warren's house on the appointed evening, with large thoughts which he wished to open. He found a well-chosen assembly of gentlemen variously distinguished; there was mutual greeting and introduction, and they were chatting agreeably on indifferent matters and drawing gently towards their great expectation, when a side-door opened, the whole company streamed in to an oyster

supper, crowned by excellent wines; and so ended the first attempt to establish æsthetic society in Boston.

Some time afterwards Dr. Channing opened his mind to Mr. and Mrs. Ripley, and with some care they invited a limited party of ladies and gentlemen. I had the honor to be present. Though I recall the fact, I do not retain any instant consequence of this attempt, or any connection between it and the new zeal of the friends who at that time began to be drawn together by sympathy of studies and of aspiration. Margaret Fuller, George Ripley, Dr. Convers Francis, Theodore Parker, Dr. Hedge, Mr. Brownson, James Freeman Clarke, William H. Channing and many others, gradually drew together and from time to time spent an afternoon at each other's houses in a serious conversation.[1] With them was always one well-known form, a pure idealist, not at all a man of letters, nor of any practical talent, nor a writer of books; a man quite too cold and contemplative for the alliances of friendship, with rare simplicity and grandeur of perception, who read Plato as an equal, and inspired his companions only in proportion as they were intellectual, — whilst the men of talent complained of the want of point

and precision in this abstract and religious thinker.[1]

These fine conversations, of course, were incomprehensible to some in the company, and they had their revenge in their little joke. One declared that "It seemed to him like going to heaven in a swing;" another reported that, at a knotty point in the discourse, a sympathizing Englishman with a squeaking voice interrupted with the question, "Mr. Alcott, a lady near me desires to inquire whether omnipotence abnegates attribute?"

I think there prevailed at that time a general belief in Boston that there was some concert of *doctrinaires* to establish certain opinions and inaugurate some movement in literature, philosophy and religion, of which design the supposed conspirators were quite innocent; for there was no concert, and only here and there two or three men or women who read and wrote, each alone, with unusual vivacity.[2] Perhaps they only agreed in having fallen upon Coleridge and Wordsworth and Goethe, then on Carlyle, with pleasure and sympathy. Otherwise, their education and reading were not marked, but had the American superficialness, and their studies were solitary. I suppose all

of them were surprised at this rumor of a school or sect, and certainly at the name of Transcendentalism, given nobody knows by whom, or when it was first applied. As these persons became in the common chances of society acquainted with each other, there resulted certainly strong friendships, which of course were exclusive in proportion to their heat: and perhaps those persons who were mutually the best friends were the most private and had no ambition of publishing their letters, diaries or conversation.[1]

From that time meetings were held for conversation, with very little form, from house to house, of people engaged in studies, fond of books, and watchful of all the intellectual light from whatever quarter it flowed. Nothing could be less formal, yet the intelligence and character and varied ability of the company gave it some notoriety and perhaps waked curiosity as to its aims and results.

Nothing more serious came of it than the modest quarterly journal called The Dial, which, under the editorship of Margaret Fuller, and later of some other, enjoyed its obscurity for four years. All its papers were unpaid contributions, and it was rather a work of friend-

ship among the narrow circle of students than the organ of any party.[1] Perhaps its writers were its chief readers: yet it contained some noble papers by Margaret Fuller, and some numbers had an instant exhausting sale, because of papers by Theodore Parker.

Theodore Parker was our Savonarola, an excellent scholar, in frank and affectionate communication with the best minds of his day, yet the tribune of the people, and the stout Reformer to urge and defend every cause of humanity with and for the humblest of mankind. He was no artist. Highly refined persons might easily miss in him the element of beauty. What he said was mere fact, almost offended you, so bald and detached; little cared he. He stood altogether for practical truth; and so to the last. He used every day and hour of his short life, and his character appeared in the last moments with the same firm control as in the midday of strength. I habitually apply to him the words of a French philosopher who speaks of "the man of Nature who abominates the steam-engine and the factory. His vast lungs breathe independence with the air of the mountains and the woods."[2]

The vulgar politician disposed of this circle cheaply as "the sentimental class." State Street

had an instinct that they invalidated contracts and threatened the stability of stocks; and it did not fancy brusque manners. Society always values, even in its teachers, inoffensive people, susceptible of conventional polish. The clergyman who would live in the city *may* have piety, but *must* have taste, whilst there was often coming, among these, some John the Baptist, wild from the woods, rude, hairy, careless of dress and quite scornful of the etiquette of cities. There was a pilgrim in those days walking in the country who stopped at every door where he hoped to find hearing for his doctrine, which was, Never to give or receive money. He was a poor printer, and explained with simple warmth the belief of himself and five or six young men with whom he agreed in opinion, of the vast mischief of our insidious coin. He thought every one should labor at some necessary product, and as soon as he had made more than enough for himself, were it corn, or paper, or cloth, or boot-jacks, he should give of the commodity to any applicant, and in turn go to his neighbor for any article which he had to spare. Of course we were curious to know how he sped in his experiments on the neighbor, and his anecdotes were interesting, and often highly

creditable. But he had the courage which so stern a return to Arcadian manners required, and had learned to sleep, in cold nights, when the farmer at whose door he knocked declined to give him a bed, on a wagon covered with the buffalo-robe under the shed, — or under the stars, when the farmer denied the shed and the buffalo-robe. I think he persisted for two years in his brave practice, but did not enlarge his church of believers.[1]

These reformers were a new class. Instead of the fiery souls of the Puritans, bent on hanging the Quaker, burning the witch and banishing the Romanist, these were gentle souls, with peaceful and even with genial dispositions, casting sheep's-eyes even on Fourier and his houris. It was a time when the air was full of reform. Robert Owen of Lanark came hither from England in 1845, and read lectures or held conversations wherever he found listeners; the most amiable, sanguine and candid of men. He had not the least doubt that he had hit on a right and perfect socialism, or that all mankind would adopt it. He was then seventy years old, and being asked, "Well, Mr. Owen, who is your disciple? How many men are there possessed of your views who will remain after you are gone,

to put them in practice?" "Not one," was his reply. Robert Owen knew Fourier in his old age. He said that Fourier learned of him all the truth he had; the rest of his system was imagination, and the imagination of a banker. Owen made the best impression by his rare benevolence. His love of men made us forget his "Three Errors." His charitable construction of men and their actions was invariable. He was the better Christian in his controversy with Christians, and he interpreted with great generosity the acts of the "Holy Alliance," and Prince Metternich, with whom the persevering *doctrinaire* had obtained interviews; "Ah," he said, "you may depend on it there are as tender hearts and as much good will to serve men, in palaces, as in colleges."[1]

And truly I honor the generous ideas of the Socialists, the magnificence of their theories and the enthusiasm with which they have been urged. They appeared the inspired men of their time. Mr. Owen preached his doctrine of labor and reward, with the fidelity and devotion of a saint, to the slow ears of his generation. Fourier, almost as wonderful an example of the mathematical mind of France as La Place or Napoleon, turned a truly vast arithmetic to the question of social

misery, and has put men under the obligation which a generous mind always confers, of conceiving magnificent hopes and making great demands as the right of man. He took his measure of that which all should and might enjoy, from no soup-society or charity-concert, but from the refinements of palaces, the wealth of universities and the triumphs of artists. He thought nobly. A man is entitled to pure air, and to the air of good conversation in his bringing up, and not, as we or so many of us, to the poor-smell and musty chambers, cats and fools. Fourier carried a whole French Revolution in his head, and much more. Here was arithmetic on a huge scale. His ciphering goes where ciphering never went before, namely, into stars, atmospheres and animals, and men and women, and classes of every character. It was the most entertaining of French romances, and could not but suggest vast possibilities of reform to the coldest and least sanguine.

We had an opportunity of learning something of these Socialists and their theory, from the indefatigable apostle of the sect in New York, Albert Brisbane.[1] Mr. Brisbane pushed his doctrine with all the force of memory, talent, honest faith and importunacy. As we listened to his

exposition it appeared to us the sublime of mechanical philosophy; for the system was the perfection of arrangement and contrivance. The force of arrangement could no farther go. The merit of the plan was that it was a system; that it had not the partiality and hint-and-fragment character of most popular schemes, but was coherent and comprehensive of facts to a wonderful degree. It was not daunted by distance, or magnitude, or remoteness of any sort, but strode about nature with a giant's step, and skipped no fact, but wove its large Ptolemaic web of cycle and epicycle, of phalanx and phalanstery, with laudable assiduity. Mechanics were pushed so far as fairly to meet spiritualism. One could not but be struck with strange coincidences betwixt Fourier and Swedenborg. Genius hitherto has been shamefully misapplied, a mere trifler. It must now set itself to raise the social condition of man and to redress the disorders of the planet he inhabits. The Desert of Sahara, the Campagna di Roma, the frozen Polar circles, which by their pestilential or hot or cold airs poison the temperate regions, accuse man. Society, concert, coöperation, is the secret of the coming Paradise. By reason of the isolation of men at the present day, all work is drudgery. By concert and the

allowing each laborer to choose his own work, it becomes pleasure. "Attractive Industry" would speedily subdue, by adventurous scientific and persistent tillage, the pestilential tracts; would equalize temperature, give health to the globe and cause the earth to yield "healthy imponderable fluids" to the solar system, as now it yields noxious fluids. The hyæna, the jackal, the gnat, the bug, the flea, were all beneficent parts of the system; the good Fourier knew what those creatures should have been, had not the mould slipped, through the bad state of the atmosphere; caused no doubt by the same vicious imponderable fluids. All these shall be redressed by human culture, and the useful goat and dog and innocent poetical moth, or the wood-tick to consume decomposing wood, shall take their place. It takes sixteen hundred and eighty men to make one Man, complete in all the faculties; that is, to be sure that you have got a good joiner, a good cook, a barber, a poet, a judge, an umbrella-maker, a mayor and alderman, and so on. Your community should consist of two thousand persons, to prevent accidents of omission; and each community should take up six thousand acres of land. Now fancy the earth planted with fifties and hundreds of these pha-

lanxes side by side,—what tillage, what architecture, what refectories, what dormitories, what reading-rooms, what concerts, what lectures, what gardens, what baths! What is not in one will be in another, and many will be within easy distance. Then know you one and all, that Constantinople is the natural capital of the globe. There, in the Golden Horn, will the Arch-Phalanx be established; there will the Omniarch reside. Aladdin and his magician, or the beautiful Scheherezade can alone, in these prosaic times before the sight, describe the material splendors collected there. Poverty shall be abolished; deformity, stupidity and crime shall be no more. Genius, grace, art, shall abound, and it is not to be doubted but that in the reign of "Attractive Industry" all men will speak in blank verse.

Certainly we listened with great pleasure to such gay and magnificent pictures. The ability and earnestness of the advocate and his friends, the comprehensiveness of their theory, its apparent directness of proceeding to the end they would secure, the indignation they felt and uttered in the presence of so much social misery, commanded our attention and respect. It contained so much truth, and promised in the attempts that shall be made to realize it so much

valuable instruction, that we are engaged to observe every step of its progress. Yet in spite of the assurances of its friends that it was new and widely discriminated from all other plans for the regeneration of society, we could not exempt it from the criticism which we apply to so many projects for reform with which the brain of the age teems. Our feeling was that Fourier had skipped no fact but one, namely Life. He treats man as a plastic thing, something that may be put up or down, ripened or retarded, moulded, polished, made into solid or fluid or gas, at the will of the leader; or perhaps as a vegetable, from which, though now a poor crab, a very good peach can by manure and exposure be in time produced, — but skips the faculty of life, which spawns and scorns system and system-makers; which eludes all conditions; which makes or supplants a thousand phalanxes and New Harmonies with each pulsation. There is an order in which in a sound mind the faculties always appear, and which, according to the strength of the individual, they seek to realize in the surrounding world. The value of Fourier's system is that it is a statement of such an order externized, or carried outward into its correspondence in facts. The mistake is that this

particular order and series is to be imposed, by force or preaching and votes, on all men, and carried into rigid execution. But what is true and good must not only be begun by life, but must be conducted to its issues by life. Could not the conceiver of this design have also believed that a similar model lay in every mind, and that the method of each associate might be trusted, as well as that of his particular Committee and General Office, No. 200 Broadway? Nay, that it would be better to say, Let us be lovers and servants of that which is just, and straightway every man becomes a centre of a holy and beneficent republic, which he sees to include all men in its law, like that of Plato, and of Christ. Before such a man the whole world becomes Fourierized or Christized or humanized, and in obedience to his most private being he finds himself, according to his presentiment, though against all sensuous probability, acting in strict concert with all others who followed their private light.

Yet, in a day of small, sour and fierce schemes, one is admonished and cheered by a project of such friendly aims and of such bold and generous proportion; there is an intellectual courage and strength in it which is superior and

commanding; it certifies the presence of so much truth in the theory, and in so far is destined to be fact.

It argued singular courage, the adoption of Fourier's system, to even a limited extent, with his books lying before the world only defended by the thin veil of the French language. The Stoic said, Forbear, Fourier said, Indulge. Fourier was of the opinion of Saint-Evremond; abstinence from pleasure appeared to him a great sin. Fourier was very French indeed.' He labored under a misapprehension of the nature of women. The Fourier marriage was a calculation how to secure the greatest amount of kissing that the infirmity of human constitution admitted. It was false and prurient, full of absurd French superstitions about women; ignorant how serious and how moral their nature always is; how chaste is their organization; how lawful a class.

It is the worst of community that it must inevitably transform into charlatans the leaders, by the endeavor continually to meet the expectation and admiration of this eager crowd of men and women seeking they know not what. Unless he have a Cossack roughness of clearing himself of what belongs not, charlatan he must be.

It was easy to see what must be the fate of this fine system in any serious and comprehensive attempt to set it on foot in this country. As soon as our people got wind of the doctrine of Marriage held by this master, it would fall at once into the hands of a lawless crew who would flock in troops to so fair a game, and, like the dreams of poetic people on the first outbreak of the old French Revolution, so theirs would disappear in a slime of mire and blood.

There is of course to every theory a tendency to run to an extreme, and to forget the limitations. In our free institutions, where every man is at liberty to choose his home and his trade, and all possible modes of working and gaining are open to him, fortunes are easily made by thousands, as in no other country. Then property proves too much for the man, and the men of science, art, intellect, are pretty sure to degenerate into selfish housekeepers, dependent on wine, coffee, furnace-heat, gas-light and fine furniture. Then instantly things swing the other way, and we suddenly find that civilization crowed too soon; that what we bragged as triumphs were treacheries: that we have opened the wrong door and let the enemy into the

castle; that civilization was a mistake; that nothing is so vulgar as a great warehouse of rooms full of furniture and trumpery; that, in the circumstances, the best wisdom were an auction or a fire. Since the foxes and the birds have the right of it, with a warm hole to keep out the weather, and no more, — a pent-house to fend the sun and rain is the house which lays no tax on the owner's time and thoughts, and which he can leave, when the sun is warm, and defy the robber. This was Thoreau's doctrine, who said that the Fourierists had a sense of duty which led them to devote themselves to their second-best. And Thoreau gave in flesh and blood and pertinacious Saxon belief the purest ethics. He was more real and practically believing in them than any of his company, and fortified you at all times with an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. Thoreau was in his own person a practical answer, almost a refutation, to the theories of the socialists. He required no Phalanx, no Government, no society, almost no memory. He lived extempore from hour to hour, like the birds and the angels; brought every day a new proposition, as revolutionary as that of yesterday, but different: the only man of leisure in his town; and his inde-

pendence made all others look like slaves. He was a good Abbot Samson, and carried a counsel in his breast.[1] "Again and again I congratulate myself on my so-called poverty, I could not overstate this advantage." "What you call bareness and poverty, is to me simplicity. God could not be unkind to me if he should try. I love best to have each thing in its season only, and enjoy doing without it at all other times. It is the greatest of all advantages to enjoy no advantage at all. I have never got over my surprise that I should have been born into the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time too." There 's an optimist for you.

I regard these philanthropists as themselves the effects of the age in which we live, and, in common with so many other good facts, the efflorescence of the period, and predicting a good fruit that ripens. They were not the creators they believed themselves, but they were unconscious prophets of a true state of society; one which the tendencies of nature lead unto, one which always establishes itself for the sane soul, though not in that manner in which they paint it; but they were describers of that which is really being done. The large cities are pha-

lansteries ; and the theorists drew all their argument from facts already taking place in our experience. The cheap way is to make every man do what he was born for. One merchant to whom I described the Fourier project, thought it must not only succeed, but that agricultural association must presently fix the price of bread, and drive single farmers into association in self-defence, as the great commercial and manufacturing companies had done. Society in England and in America is trying the experiment again in small pieces, in coöperative associations, in cheap eating-houses, as well as in the economies of club-houses and in cheap reading-rooms.

It chanced that here in one family were two brothers, one a brilliant and fertile inventor, and close by him his own brother, a man of business, who knew how to direct his faculty and make it instantly and permanently lucrative. Why could not the like partnership be formed between the inventor and the man of executive talent everywhere? Each man of thought is surrounded by wiser men than he, if they cannot write as well. Cannot he and they combine? Talents supplement each other. Beaumont and Fletcher and many French novelists have known how to utilize such partnerships. Why

not have a larger one, and with more various members?

Housekeepers say, "There are a thousand things to everything," and if one must study all the strokes to be laid, all the faults to be shunned in a building or work of art, of its keeping, its composition, its site, its color, there would be no end. But the architect, acting under a necessity to build the house for its purpose, finds himself helped, he knows not how, into all these merits of detail, and steering clear, though in the dark, of those dangers which might have shipwrecked him.

BROOK FARM

The West Roxbury Association was formed in 1841, by a society of members, men and women, who bought a farm in West Roxbury, of about two hundred acres, and took possession of the place in April. Mr. George Ripley was the President, and I think Mr. Charles Dana (afterwards well known as one of the editors of the New York Tribune) was the Secretary. Many members took shares by paying money, others held shares by their labor. An old house on the place was enlarged, and three new houses built. William Allen was at first and for some

time the head farmer, and the work was distributed in orderly committees to the men and women. There were many employments more or less lucrative found for, or brought hither by these members, — shoemakers, joiners, sempstresses. They had good scholars among them, and so received pupils for their education. The parents of the children in some instances wished to live there, and were received as boarders. Many persons, attracted by the beauty of the place and the culture and ambition of the community, joined them as boarders, and lived there for years. I think the numbers of this mixed community soon reached eighty or ninety souls.[1]

It was a noble and generous movement in the projectors, to try an experiment of better living. They had the feeling that our ways of living were too conventional and expensive, not allowing each to do what he had a talent for, and not permitting men to combine cultivation of mind and heart with a reasonable amount of daily labor. At the same time, it was an attempt to lift others with themselves, and to share the advantages they should attain, with others now deprived of them.

There was no doubt great variety of character and purpose in the members of the community.

It consisted in the main of young people, — few of middle age, and none old. Those who inspired and organized it were of course persons impatient of the routine, the uniformity, perhaps they would say the squalid contentment of society around them, which was so timid and skeptical of any progress. One would say then that impulse was the rule in the society, without centripetal balance; perhaps it would not be severe to say, intellectual sans-culottism, an impatience of the formal, routinary character of our educational, religious, social and economical life in Massachusetts. Yet there was immense hope in these young people. There was nobleness; there were self-sacrificing victims who compensated for the levity and rashness of their companions. The young people lived a great deal in a short time, and came forth some of them perhaps with shattered constitutions. And a few grave sanitary influences of character were happily there, which, I was assured, were always felt.

George W. Curtis of New York, and his brother, of English Oxford, were members of the family from the first. Theodore Parker, the near neighbor of the farm and the most intimate friend of Mr. Ripley, was a frequent visitor. Mr. Ichabod Morton of Plymouth, a plain man for-

merly engaged through many years in the fisheries with success, eccentric, — with a persevering interest in education, and of a very democratic religion, came and built a house on the farm, and he, or members of his family, continued there to the end. Margaret Fuller, with her joyful conversation and large sympathy, was often a guest, and always in correspondence with her friends. Many ladies, whom to name were to praise, gave character and varied attraction to the place.[1]

In and around Brook Farm, whether as members, boarders or visitors, were many remarkable persons, for character, intellect or accomplishments. I recall one youth of the subtlest mind, I believe I must say the subtlest observer and diviner of character I ever met, living, reading, writing, talking there, perhaps as long as the colony held together; his mind fed and overfed by whatever is exalted in genius, whether in Poetry or Art, in Drama or Music, or in social accomplishment and elegancy; a man of no employment or practical aims, a student and philosopher, who found his daily enjoyment not with the elders or his exact contemporaries so much as with the fine boys who were skating and playing ball or bird-hunting; forming the

closest friendships with such, and finding his delight in the petulant heroism of boys; yet was he the chosen counsellor to whom the guardians would repair on any hitch or difficulty that occurred, and draw from him a wise counsel. A fine, subtle, inward genius, puny in body and habit as a girl, yet with an *aplomb* like a general, never disconcerted. He lived and thought, in 1842, such worlds of life; all hinging on the thought of Being or Reality as opposed to consciousness; hating intellect with the ferocity of a Swedenborg. He was the Abbé or spiritual father, from his religious bias. His reading lay in Æschylus, Plato, Dante, Calderon, Shakspeare, and in modern novels and romances of merit.[1] There too was Hawthorne, with his cold yet gentle genius, if he failed to do justice to this temporary home. There was the accomplished Doctor of Music, who has presided over its literature ever since in our metropolis.[2] Rev. William Henry Channing, now of London, was from the first a student of Socialism in France and England, and in perfect sympathy with this experiment. An English baronet, Sir John Caldwell, was a frequent visitor, and more or less directly interested in the leaders and the success.

Hawthorne drew some sketches, not happily,

as I think ; I should rather say, quite unworthy of his genius. No friend who knew Margaret Fuller could recognize her rich and brilliant genius under the dismal mask which the public fancied was meant for her in that disagreeable story.

The Founders of Brook Farm should have this praise, that they made what all people try to make, an agreeable place to live in. All comers, even the most fastidious, found it the pleasantest of residences. It is certain that freedom from household routine, variety of character and talent, variety of work, variety of means of thought and instruction, art, music, poetry, reading, masquerade, did not permit sluggishness or despondency; broke up routine. There is agreement in the testimony that it was, to most of the associates, education ; to many, the most important period of their life, the birth of valued friendships, their first acquaintance with the riches of conversation, their training in behavior. The art of letter-writing, it is said, was immensely cultivated. Letters were always flying not only from house to house, but from room to room. It was a perpetual picnic, a French Revolution in small, an Age of Reason in a patty-pan.

In the American social communities, the gossip found such vent and sway as to become despotic. The institutions were whispering-galleries, in which the adored Saxon privacy was lost. Married women I believe uniformly decided against the community. It was to them like the brassy and lacquered life in hotels. The common school was well enough, but to the common nursery they had grave objections. Eggs might be hatched in ovens, but the hen on her own account much preferred the old way. A hen without her chickens was but half a hen.

It was a curious experience of the patrons and leaders of this noted community, in which the agreement with many parties was that they should give so many hours of instruction in mathematics, in music, in moral and intellectual philosophy, and so forth, — that in every instance the newcomers showed themselves keenly alive to the advantages of the society, and were sure to avail themselves of every means of instruction; their knowledge was increased, their manners refined, — but they became in that proportion averse to labor, and were charged by the heads of the departments with a certain indolence and selfishness.

In practice it is always found that virtue is

occasional, spotty, and not linear or cubic. Good people are as bad as rogues if steady performance is claimed; the conscience of the conscientious runs in veins, and the most punctilious in some particulars are latitudinarian in others. It was very gently said that people on whom beforehand all persons would put the utmost reliance were not responsible. They saw the necessity that the work must be done, and did it not, and it of course fell to be done by the few religious workers. No doubt there was in many a certain strength drawn from the fury of dissent. Thus Mr. Ripley told Theodore Parker, "There is your accomplished friend ——: he would hoe corn all Sunday if I would let him, but all Massachusetts could not make him do it on Monday."

Of course every visitor found that there was a comic side to this Paradise of shepherds and shepherdesses. There was a stove in every chamber, and every one might burn as much wood as he or she would saw. The ladies took cold on washing-day; so it was ordained that the gentlemen-shepherds should wring and hang out clothes; which they punctually did. And it would sometimes occur that when they danced in the evening, clothespins dropped plentifully

from their pockets. The country members naturally were surprised to observe that one man ploughed all day and one looked out of the window all day, and perhaps drew his picture, and both received at night the same wages. One would meet also some modest pride in their advanced condition, signified by a frequent phrase, "Before we came out of civilization."

The question which occurs to you had occurred much earlier to Fourier: "How in this charming Elysium is the dirty work to be done?" And long ago Fourier had exclaimed, "Ah! I have it," and jumped with joy. "Don't you see," he cried, "that nothing so delights the young Caucasian child as dirt? See the mud-pies that all children will make if you will let them. See how much more joy they find in pouring their pudding on the table-cloth than into their beautiful mouths. The children from six to eight, organized into companies with flags and uniforms, shall do this last function of civilization."

In Brook Farm was this peculiarity, that there was no head. In every family is the father; in every factory, a foreman; in a shop, a master; in a boat, the skipper; but in this Farm, no authority; each was master or mistress of his or

her actions; happy, hapless anarchists. They expressed, after much perilous experience, the conviction that plain dealing was the best defence of manners and moral between the sexes. People cannot live together in any but necessary ways. The only candidates who will present themselves will be those who have tried the experiment of independence and ambition, and have failed; and none others will barter for the most comfortable equality the chance of superiority. Then all communities have quarrelled. Few people can live together on their merits. There must be kindred, or mutual economy, or a common interest in their business, or other external tie.

The society at Brook Farm existed, I think, about six or seven years, and then broke up, the Farm was sold, and I believe all the partners came out with pecuniary loss. Some of them had spent on it the accumulations of years. I suppose they all, at the moment, regarded it as a failure. I do not think they can so regard it now, but probably as an important chapter in their experience which has been of lifelong value. What knowledge of themselves and of each other, what various practical wisdom, what personal power, what studies of character, what

accumulated culture many of the members owed to it! What mutual measure they took of each other! It was a close union, like that in a ship's cabin, of clergymen, young collegians, merchants, mechanics, farmers' sons and daughters, with men and women of rare opportunities and delicate culture, yet assembled there by a sentiment which all shared, some of them hotly shared, of the honesty of a life of labor and of the beauty of a life of humanity. The yeoman saw refined manners in persons who were his friends; and the lady or the romantic scholar saw the continuous strength and faculty in people who would have disgusted them but that these powers were now spent in the direction of their own theory of life.

I recall these few selected facts, none of them of much independent interest, but symptomatic of the times and country. I please myself with the thought that our American mind is not now eccentric or rude in its strength, but is beginning to show a quiet power, drawn from wide and abundant sources, proper to a Continent and to an educated people. If I have owed much to the special influences I have indicated, I am not less aware of that excellent and increasing circle of masters in arts and in song and in science, who

cheer the intellect of our cities and this country to-day, — whose genius is not a lucky accident, but normal, and with broad foundation of culture, and so inspires the hope of steady strength advancing on itself, and a day without night.[1]

XIII

THE CHARDON STREET CONVENTION

THE CHARDON STREET CONVENTION

IN the month of November, 1840, a Convention of Friends of Universal Reform assembled in the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston, in obedience to a call in the newspapers, signed by a few individuals, inviting all persons to a public discussion of the institutions of the Sabbath, the Church and the Ministry. The Convention organized itself by the choice of Edmund Quincy as Moderator, spent three days in the consideration of the Sabbath, and adjourned to a day in March of the following year, for the discussion of the second topic. In March, accordingly, a three-days' session was holden in the same place, on the subject of the Church, and a third meeting fixed for the following November, which was accordingly holden; and the Convention debated, for three days again, the remaining subject of the Priesthood. This Convention never printed any report of its deliberations, nor pretended to arrive at any result by the expression of its sense in formal resolutions; — the professed objects of those persons who felt the greatest interest in its meetings being

simply the elucidation of truth through free discussion. The daily newspapers reported, at the time, brief sketches of the course of proceedings, and the remarks of the principal speakers. These meetings attracted a great deal of public attention, and were spoken of in different circles in every note of hope, of sympathy, of joy, of alarm, of abhorrence and of merriment. The composition of the assembly was rich and various. The singularity and latitude of the summons drew together, from all parts of New England and also from the Middle States, men of every shade of opinion from the straitest orthodoxy to the wildest heresy, and many persons whose church was a church of one member only. A great variety of dialect and of costume was noticed; a great deal of confusion, eccentricity and freak appeared, as well as of zeal and enthusiasm. If the assembly was disorderly, it was picturesque. Madmen, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians and Philosophers, — all came successively to the top, and seized their moment, if not their hour, wherein to chide, or pray, or preach, or protest. The faces were a study. The most daring inno-

vators and the champions-until-death of the old cause sat side by side. The still-living merit of the oldest New England families, glowing yet after several generations, encountered the founders of families, fresh merit, emerging, and expanding the brows to a new breadth, and lighting a clownish face with sacred fire. The assembly was characterized by the predominance of a certain plain, sylvan strength and earnestness, whilst many of the most intellectual and cultivated persons attended its councils. Dr. Channing, Edward Taylor, Bronson Alcott, Mr. Garrison, Mr. May, Theodore Parker, H. C. Wright, Dr. Osgood, William Adams, Edward Palmer, Jones Very, Maria W. Chapman and many other persons of a mystical or sectarian or philanthropic renown, were present, and some of them participant. And there was no want of female speakers; Mrs. Little and Mrs. Lucy Sessions took a pleasing and memorable part in the debate, and that flea of Conventions, Mrs. Abigail Folsom, was but too ready with her interminable scroll. If there was not parliamentary order, there was life, and the assurance of that constitutional love for religion and religious liberty which, in all periods, characterizes the inhabitants of this part of America.

There was a great deal of wearisome speaking in each of those three-days' sessions, but relieved by signal passages of pure eloquence, by much vigor of thought, and especially by the exhibition of character, and by the victories of character. These men and women were in search of something better and more satisfying than a vote or a definition, and they found what they sought, or the pledge of it, in the attitude taken by individuals of their number of resistance to the insane routine of parliamentary usage; in the lofty reliance on principles, and the prophetic dignity and transfiguration which accompanies, even amidst opposition and ridicule, a man whose mind is made up to obey the great inward Commander, and who does not anticipate his own action, but awaits confidently the new emergency for the new counsel.[1] By no means the least value of this Convention, in our eye, was the scope it gave to the genius of Mr. Alcott, and not its least instructive lesson was the gradual but sure ascendency of his spirit, in spite of the incredulity and derision with which he is at first received, and in spite, we might add, of his own failures.[2] Moreover, although no decision was had, and no action taken on all the great points mooted in the discussion, yet the

Convention brought together many remarkable persons, face to face, and gave occasion to memorable interviews and conversations, in the hall, in the lobbies or around the doors.[1]

XIV

EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.

We love the venerable house
  Our fathers built to God:
In Heaven are kept their grateful vows,
  Their dust endears the sod.

From humble tenements around
  Came up the pensive train,
And in the church a blessing found
  That filled their homes again.

EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.

EZRA RIPLEY was born May 1, 1751 (O. S.), at Woodstock, Connecticut. He was the fifth of the nineteen children of Noah and Lydia (Kent) Ripley. Seventeen of these nineteen children married, and it is stated that the mother died leaving nineteen children, one hundred and two grandchildren and ninety-six great-grandchildren. The father was born at Hingham, on the farm purchased by his ancestor, William Ripley, of England, at the first settlement of the town; which farm has been occupied by seven or eight generations. Ezra Ripley followed the business of farming till sixteen years of age, when his father wished him to be qualified to teach a grammar school, not thinking himself able to send one son to college without injury to his other children. With this view, the father agreed with the late Rev. Dr. Forbes of Gloucester, then minister of North Brookfield, to fit Ezra for college by the time he should be twenty-one years of age, and to have him labor during the time sufficiently to pay for his instruction, clothing and books.

But, when fitted for college, the son could

not be contented with teaching, which he had tried the preceding winter. He had early manifested a desire for learning, and could not be satisfied without a public education. Always inclined to notice ministers, and frequently attempting, when only five or six years old, to imitate them by preaching, now that he had become a professor of religion he had an ardent desire to be a preacher of the gospel. He had to encounter great difficulties, but, through a kind providence and the patronage of Dr. Forbes, he entered Harvard University, July, 1772. The commencement of the Revolutionary War greatly interrupted his education at college. In 1775, in his senior year, the college was removed from Cambridge to this town.[1] The studies were much broken up. Many of the students entered the army, and the class never returned to Cambridge. There were an unusually large number of distinguished men in this class of 1776: Christopher Gore, Governor of Massachusetts and Senator in Congress; Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of Massachusetts; George Thacher, Judge of the Supreme Court; Royall Tyler, Chief Justice of Vermont; and the late learned Dr. Prince, of Salem.

Mr. Ripley was ordained minister of Concord

November 7, 1778. He married, November 16, 1780, Mrs. Phebe (Bliss) Emerson, then a widow of thirty-nine, with five children.[1] They had three children: Sarah, born August 18, 1781; Samuel, born May 11, 1783; Daniel Bliss, born August 1, 1784. He died September 21, 1841.

To these facts, gathered chiefly from his own diary, and stated nearly in his own words, I can only add a few traits from memory.

He was identified with the ideas and forms of the New England Church, which expired about the same time with him, so that he and his coevals seemed the rear guard of the great camp and army of the Puritans, which, however in its last days declining into formalism, in the heyday of its strength had planted and liberated America. It was a pity that his old meeting-house should have been modernized in his time. I am sure all who remember both will associate his form with whatever was grave and droll in the old cold, unpainted, uncarpeted, square-pewed meeting-house, with its four iron-gray deacons in their little box under the pulpit, — with Watts's hymns, with long prayers, rich with the diction of ages; and not less with the report like musketry from the movable seats. He and his

contemporaries, the old New England clergy, were believers in what is called a particular providence, — certainly, as they held it, a very particular providence, — following the narrowness of King David and the Jews, who thought the universe existed only or mainly for their church and congregation. Perhaps I cannot better illustrate this tendency than by citing a record from the diary of the father of his predecessor,[1] the minister of Malden, written in the blank leaves of the almanac for the year 1735. The minister writes against January 31st: "Bought a shay for 27 pounds, 10 shillings. The Lord grant it may be a comfort and blessing to my family." In March following he notes: "Had a safe and comfortable journey to York." But April 24th, we find: "Shay overturned, with my wife and I in it, yet neither of us much hurt. Blessed be our gracious Preserver. Part of the shay, as it lay upon one side, went over my wife, and yet she was scarcely anything hurt. How wonderful the preservation." Then again, May 5th: "Went to the beach with three of the children. The beast, being frightened when we were all out of the shay, overturned and broke it. I desire (I hope I desire it) that the Lord would teach me suitably to resent this Provi-

dence,' to make suitable remarks on it, and to be suitably affected with it. Have I done well to get me a shay? Have I not been proud or too fond of this convenience? Do I exercise the faith in the Divine care and protection which I ought to do? Should I not be more in my study and less fond of diversion? Do I not withhold more than is meet from pious and charitable uses?" Well, on 15th May we have this: "Shay brought home; mending cost thirty shillings. Favored in this respect beyond expectation." 16th May: "My wife and I rode together to Rumney Marsh. The beast frighted several times." And at last we have this record, June 4th: "Disposed of my shay to Rev. Mr. White."

The same faith made what was strong and what was weak in Dr. Ripley and his associates. He was a perfectly sincere man, punctual, severe, but just and charitable, and if he made his forms a strait-jacket to others, he wore the same himself all his years. Trained in this church, and very well qualified by his natural talent to work in it, it was never out of his mind. He looked at every person and thing from the parochial point of view. I remember, when a boy, driving about Concord with him, and in passing

each house he told the story of the family that lived in it, and especially he gave me anecdotes of the nine church members who had made a division in the church in the time of his predecessor, and showed me how every one of the nine had come to bad fortune or to a bad end. His prayers for rain and against the lightning, "that it may not lick up our spirits;" and for good weather; and against sickness and insanity; "that we have not been tossed to and fro until the dawning of the day; that we have not been a terror to ourselves and others," — are well remembered, and his own entire faith that these petitions were not to be overlooked, and were entitled to a favorable answer. Some of those around me will remember one occasion of severe drought in this vicinity, when the late Rev. Mr. Goodwin offered to relieve the Doctor of the duty of leading in prayer; but the Doctor suddenly remembering the season, rejected his offer with some humor, as with an air that said to all the congregation, "This is no time for you young Cambridge men; the affair, sir, is getting serious. I will pray myself." [1] One August afternoon, when I was in his hayfield helping him with his man to rake up his hay, I well remember his pleading, almost reproachful looks at the

sky, when the thunder-gust was coming up to spoil his hay. He raked very fast, then looked at the cloud, and said, "We are in the Lord's hand; mind your rake, George! We are in the Lord's hand;" and seemed to say, "You know me; this field is mine, — Dr. Ripley's, — thine own servant!" [1]

He used to tell the story of one of his old friends, the minister of Sudbury, who, being at the Thursday lecture in Boston, heard the officiating clergyman praying for rain. As soon as the service was over, he went to the petitioner, and said, "You Boston ministers, as soon as a tulip wilts under your windows, go to church and pray for rain, until all Concord and Sudbury are under water." I once rode with him to a house at Nine Acre Corner to attend the funeral of the father of a family. He mentioned to me on the way his fears that the oldest son, who was now to succeed to the farm, was becoming intemperate. We presently arrived, and the Doctor addressed each of the mourners separately: "Sir, I condole with you." "Madam, I condole with you." "Sir, I knew your great-grandfather. When I came to this town, your great-grandfather was a substantial farmer in this very place, a member of the church, and

an excellent citizen. Your grandfather followed him, and was a virtuous man. Now your father is to be carried to his grave, full of labors and virtues. There is none of that large family left but you, and it rests with you to bear up the good name and usefulness of your ancestors. If you fail,— 'Ichabod, the glory is departed.' Let us pray." Right manly he was, and the manly thing he could always say. I can remember a little speech he made to me, when the last tie of blood which held me and my brothers to his house was broken by the death of his daughter. He said, on parting, "I wish you and your brothers to come to this house as you have always done. You will not like to be excluded; I shall not like to be neglected."

When "Put" Merriam, after his release from the state prison, had the effrontery to call on the Doctor as an old acquaintance, in the midst of general conversation Mr. Frost came in, and the Doctor presently said, "Mr. Merriam, my brother and colleague, Mr. Frost, has come to take tea with me. I regret very much the causes (which you know very well) which make it impossible for me to ask you to stay and break bread with us." With the Doctor's views it was a matter of religion to say thus much. He had

a reverence and love of society, and the patient, continuing courtesy, carrying out every respectful attention to the end, which marks what is called the manners of the old school. His hospitality obeyed Charles Lamb's rule, and "ran fine to the last." His partiality for ladies was always strong, and was by no means abated by time. He claimed privilege of years, was much addicted to kissing; spared neither maid, wife nor widow, and, as a lady thus favored remarked to me, "seemed as if he was going to make a meal of you."

He was very credulous, and as he was no reader of books or journals, he knew nothing beyond the columns of his weekly religious newspaper, the tracts of his sect, and perhaps the Middlesex Yeoman. He was the easy dupe of any tonguey agent, whether colonizationist or anti-papist, or charlatan of iron combs, or tractors, or phrenology, or magnetism, who went by. At the time when Jack Downing's letters were in every paper, he repeated to me at table some of the particulars of that gentleman's intimacy with General Jackson, in a manner that betrayed to me at once that he took the whole for fact. To undeceive him, I hastened to recall some particulars to show the absurdity of the thing, as the

Major and the President going out skating on the Potomac, etc. "Why," said the Doctor with perfect faith, "it was a bright moonlight night;" and I am not sure that he did not die in the belief in the reality of Major Downing. Like other credulous men, he was opinionative, and, as I well remember, a great browbeater of the poor old fathers who still survived from the 19th of April, to the end that they should testify to his history as he had written it.

He was a man so kind and sympathetic, his character was so transparent, and his merits so intelligible to all observers, that he was very justly appreciated in this community. He was a natural gentleman, no dandy, but courtly, hospitable, manly and public-spirited; his nature social, his house open to all men. We remember the remark made by the old farmer who used to travel hither from Maine, that no horse from the Eastern country would go by the Doctor's gate. Travellers from the West and North and South bear the like testimony. His brow was serene and open to his visitor, for he loved men, and he had no studies, no occupations, which company could interrupt. His friends were his study, and to see them loosened his talents and his tongue. In his house dwelt order and

prudence and plenty. There was no waste and no stint. He was open-handed and just and generous. Ingratitude and meanness in his beneficiaries did not wear out his compassion; he bore the insult, and the next day his basket for the beggar, his horse and chaise for the cripple, were at their door. Though he knew the value of a dollar as well as another man, yet he loved to buy dearer and sell cheaper than others. He subscribed to all charities, and it is no reflection on others to say that he was the most public-spirited man in the town. The late Dr. Gardiner, in a funeral sermon on some parishioner whose virtues did not readily come to mind, honestly said, "He was good at fires." Dr. Ripley had many virtues, and yet all will remember that even in his old age, if the firebell was rung, he was instantly on horseback with his buckets, and bag.[1]

He showed even in his fireside discourse traits of that pertinency and judgment, softening ever and anon into elegancy, which make the distinction of the scholar, and which, under better discipline, might have ripened into a Bentley or a Porson. He had a foresight, when he opened his mouth, of all that he would say, and he marched straight to the conclusion. In debate, in the

vestry of the Lyceum, the structure of his sentences was admirable; so neat, so natural, so terse, his words fell like stones; and often, though quite unconscious of it, his speech was a satire on the loose, voluminous, draggle-tail periods of other speakers. He sat down when he had done. A man of anecdote, his talk in the parlor was chiefly narrative. We remember the remark of a gentleman who listened with much delight to his conversation at the time when the Doctor was preparing to go to Baltimore and Washington, that "a man who could tell a story so well was company for kings and John Quincy Adams." [1]

Sage and savage strove harder in him than in any of my acquaintances, each getting the mastery by turns, and pretty sudden turns: "Save us from the extremity of cold and these violent sudden changes." "The society will meet after the Lyceum, as it is difficult to bring people together in the evening, — and no moon." "Mr. N. F. is dead, and I expect to hear of the death of Mr. B. It is cruel to separate old people from their wives in this cold weather."

With a very limited acquaintance with books, his knowledge was an external experience, an Indian wisdom, the observation of such facts as country life for nearly a century could supply.

He watched with interest the garden, the field, the orchard, the house and the barn, horse, cow, sheep and dog, and all the common objects that engage the thought of the farmer. He kept his eye on the horizon, and knew the weather like a sea-captain. The usual experiences of men, birth, marriage, sickness, death, burial; the common temptations; the common ambitions; — he studied them all, and sympathized so well in these that he was excellent company and counsel to all, even the most humble and ignorant. With extraordinary states of mind, with states of enthusiasm or enlarged speculation, he had no sympathy, and pretended to none. He was sincere, and kept to his point, and his mark was never remote. His conversation was strictly personal and apt to the party and the occasion. An eminent skill he had in saying difficult and unspeakable things; in delivering to a man or a woman that which all their other friends had abstained from saying, in uncovering the bandage from a sore place, and applying the surgeon's knife with a truly surgical spirit. Was a man a sot, or a spendthrift, or too long time a bachelor, or suspected of some hidden crime, or had he quarrelled with his wife, or collared his father, or was there any cloud or suspicious circumstances in his

behavior, the good pastor knew his way straight to that point, believing himself entitled to a full explanation, and whatever relief to the conscience of both parties plain speech could effect was sure to be procured. In all such passages he justified himself to the conscience, and commonly to the love, of the persons concerned. He was the more competent to these searching discourses from his knowledge of family history. He knew everybody's grandfather, and seemed to address each person rather as the representative of his house and name, than as an individual. In him have perished more local and personal anecdotes of this village and vicinity than are possessed by any survivor. This intimate knowledge of families, and this skill of speech, and still more, his sympathy, made him incomparable in his parochial visits, and in his exhortations and prayers. He gave himself up to his feelings, and said on the instant the best things in the world. Many and many a felicity he had in his prayer, now forever lost, which defied all the rules of all the rhetoricians. He did not know when he was good in prayer or sermon, for he had no literature and no art; but he believed, and therefore spoke.[1] He was eminently loyal in his nature, and not fond of adventure or innovation. By

education, and still more by temperament, he was engaged to the old forms of the New England Church. Not speculative, but affectionate, devout, but with an extreme love of order, he adopted heartily, though in its mildest form, the creed and catechism of the fathers, and appeared a modern Israelite in his attachment to the Hebrew history and faith. He was a man very easy to read, for his whole life and conversation were consistent. All his opinions and actions might be securely predicted by a good observer on short acquaintance. My classmate at Cambridge, Frederick King, told me from Governor Gore, who was the Doctor's classmate, that in college he was called Holy Ripley.

And now, in his old age, when all the antique Hebraism and its customs are passing away, it is fit that he too should depart, — most fit that in the fall of laws a loyal man should die.[1]

XV

MARY MOODY EMERSON

The yesterday doth never smile,
To-day goes drudging through the while,
Yet in the name of Godhead, I
The morrow front and can defy;
Though I am weak, yet God, when prayed,
Cannot withhold his conquering aid.
Ah me! it was my childhood's thought,
If He should make my web a blot
On life's fair picture of delight,
My heart's content would find it right.
But O, these waves and leaves, —
When happy, stoic Nature grieves, —
No human speech so beautiful
As their murmurs, mine to lull.
On this altar God hath built
I lay my vanity and guilt;
Nor me can Hope or Passion urge,
Hearing as now the lofty dirge
Which blasts of Northern mountains hymn,
Nature's funeral high and dim, —
Sable pageantry of clouds,
Mourning summer laid in shrouds.
Many a day shall dawn and die,
Many an angel wander by,
And passing, light my sunken turf,
Moist perhaps by ocean surf,

Forgotten amid splendid tombs,
Yet wreathed and hid by summer blooms.
On earth I dream; — I die to be:
Time! shake not thy bald head at me.
I challenge thee to hurry past,
Or for my turn to fly too fast.

"She is of too high a mind and dignity not only to seek, but almost to wish, the friendship of any creature. They whom she is pleased to choose are such as are of the most eminent condition both for power and employment, — not with any design towards her own particular, either of advantage or curiosity, but her nature values fortunate persons. She prefers the conversation of men to that of women; not but she can talk on the fashions with her female friends, but she is too soon sensible that she can set them as she wills; that preëminence shortens all equality. She converses with those who are most distinguished for their conversational powers. Of Love freely will she discourse, listen to all its faults and mark its power: and will take a deep interest for persons of celebrity."

[Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, the friend of Strafford and of Pym, is thus described by Sir Toby Matthews.]

MARY MOODY EMERSON

I WISH to meet the invitation with which the ladies have honored me by offering them a portrait of real life. It is a representative life, such as could hardly have appeared out of New England; of an age now past, and of which I think no types survive. Perhaps I deceive myself and overestimate its interest. It has to me a value like that which many readers find in Madame Guyon, in Rahel, in Eugénie de Guérin, but it is purely original and hardly admits of a duplicate. Then it is a fruit of Calvinism and New England, and marks the precise time when the power of the old creed yielded to the influence of modern science and humanity.

I have found that I could only bring you this portrait by selections from the diary of my heroine, premising a sketch of her time and place. I report some of the thoughts and soliloquies of a country girl, poor, solitary, — 'a goody' as she called herself, — growing from youth to age amid slender opportunities and usually very humble company.

Mary Moody Emerson was born just before the outbreak of the Revolution. When intro-

duced to Lafayette at Portland, she told him that she was "in arms" at the Concord Fight. Her father, the minister of Concord, a warm patriot in 1775, went as a chaplain to the American army at Ticonderoga: he carried his infant daughter, before he went, to his mother in Malden and told her to keep the child until he returned. He died at Rutland, Vermont, of army-fever, the next year, and Mary remained at Malden with her grandmother, and, after her death, with her father's sister, in whose house she grew up, rarely seeing her brothers and sisters in Concord. This aunt and her husband lived on a farm, were getting old, and the husband a shiftless, easy man. There was plenty of work for the little niece to do day by day, and not always bread enough in the house.

One of her tasks, it appears, was to watch for the approach of the deputy-sheriff, who might come to confiscate the spoons or arrest the uncle for debt. Later, another aunt, who had become insane, was brought hither to end her days. More and sadder work for this young girl. She had no companions, lived in entire solitude with these old people, very rarely cheered by short visits from her brothers and sisters. Her mother had married again, — married the minister who suc-

ceeded her husband in the parish at Concord [Dr. Ezra Ripley], and had now a young family growing up around her.

Her aunt became strongly attached to Mary, and persuaded the family to give the child up to her as a daughter, on some terms embracing a care of her future interests. She would leave the farm to her by will. This promise was kept; she came into possession of the property many years after, and her dealings with it gave her no small trouble, though they give much piquancy to her letters in after years. Finally it was sold, and its price invested in a share of a farm in Maine, where she lived as a boarder with her sister, for many years. It was in a picturesque country, within sight of the White Mountains, with a little lake in front at the foot of a high hill called Bear Mountain. Not far from the house was a brook running over a granite floor like the Franconia Flume, and noble forests around. Every word she writes about this farm ("Elm Vale," Waterford), her dealings and vexations about it, her joys and raptures of religion and Nature, interest like a romance, and to those who may hereafter read her letters, will make its obscure acres amiable.

In Malden she lived through all her youth

and early womanhood, with the habit of visiting the families of her brothers and sisters on any necessity of theirs. Her good will to serve in time of sickness or of pressure was known to them, and promptly claimed, and her attachment to the youths and maidens growing up in those families was secure for any trait of talent or of character. Her sympathy for young people who pleased her was almost passionate, and was sure to make her arrival in each house a holiday.[1]

Her early reading was Milton, Young, Akenside, Samuel Clarke, Jonathan Edwards, and always the Bible. Later, Plato, Plotinus, Marcus Antoninus, Stewart, Coleridge, Cousin, Herder, Locke, Madame De Staël, Channing, Mackintosh, Byron. Nobody can read in her manuscript, or recall the conversation of old-school people, without seeing that Milton and Young had a religious authority in their mind, and nowise the slight, merely entertaining quality of modern bards. And Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, — how venerable and organic as Nature they are in her mind! What a subject is her mind and life for the finest novel! When I read Dante, the other day, and his paraphrases to signify with more adequateness Christ or Jehovah, whom do you

think I was reminded of? Whom but Mary Emerson and her eloquent theology? She had a deep sympathy with genius. When it was unhallowed, as in Byron, she had none the less, whilst she deplored and affected to denounce him. But she adored it when ennobled by character. She liked to notice that the greatest geniuses have died ignorant of their power and influence. She wished you to scorn to shine. "My opinion," she writes, [is] "that a mind like Byron's would never be satisfied with modern Unitarianism, — that the fiery depths of Calvinism, its high and mysterious elections to eternal bliss, beyond angels, and all its attendant wonders would have alone been fitted to fix his imagination."

Her wit was so fertile, and only used to strike, that she never used it for display, any more than a wasp would parade his sting. It was ever the will and not the phrase that concerned her. Yet certain expressions, when they marked a memorable state of mind in her experience, recurred to her afterwards, and she would vindicate herself as having said to Dr. Ripley or Uncle Lincoln [Ripley] so and so, at such a period of her life. But they were intensely true when first spoken. All her language was happy, but

inimitable, unattainable by talent, as if caught from some dream. She calls herself "the puny pilgrim, whose sole talent is sympathy." "I like that kind of apathy that is a triumph to overset."

She writes to her nephew Charles Emerson, in 1833: "I could never have adorned the garden. If I had been in aught but dreary deserts, I should have idolized my friends, despised the world and been haughty. I never expected connections and matrimony. My taste was formed in romance, and I knew I was not destined to please. I love God and his creation as I never else could. I scarcely feel the sympathies of this life enough to agitate the pool. This in general, one case or so excepted, and even this is a relation to God through you. 'T was so in my happiest early days, when you were at my side."

Destitution is the Muse of her genius, — Destitution and Death. I used to propose that her epitaph should be: "Here lies the angel of Death." And wonderfully as she varies and poetically repeats that image in every page and day, yet not less fondly and sublimely she returns to the other, — the grandeur of humility and privation, as thus: "The chief witness which

I have had of a Godlike principle of action and feeling is in the disinterested joy felt in others' superiority. For the love of superior virtue is mine own gift from God." "Where were thine own intellect if others had not lived?"

She had many acquaintances among the notables of the time; and now and then in her migrations from town to town in Maine and Massachusetts, in search of a new boarding-place, discovered some preacher with sense or piety, or both. For on her arrival at any new home she was likely to steer first to the minister's house and pray his wife to take a boarder; and as the minister found quickly that she knew all his books and many more, and made shrewd guesses at his character and possibilities, she would easily rouse his curiosity, as a person who could read his secret and tell him his fortune.

She delighted in success, in youth, in beauty, in genius, in manners. When she met a young person who interested her, she made herself acquainted and intimate with him or her at once, by sympathy, by flattery, by raillery, by anecdotes, by wit, by rebuke, and stormed the castle. None but was attracted or piqued by her interest and wit and wide acquaintance with books and with eminent names. She said she gave herself

full swing in these sudden intimacies, for she knew she should disgust them soon, and resolved to have their best hours. "Society is shrewd to detect those who do not belong to her train, and seldom wastes her attentions." She surprised, attracted, chided and denounced her companion by turns, and pretty rapid turns. But no intelligent youth or maiden could have once met her without remembering her with interest, and learning something of value. Scorn trifles, lift your aims: do what you are afraid to do: sublimity of character must come from sublimity of motive: these were the lessons which were urged with vivacity, in ever new language. But if her companion was dull, her impatience knew no bounds. She tired presently of dull conversations, and asked to be read to, and so disposed of the visitor. If the voice or the reading tired her, she would ask the friend if he or she would do an errand for her, and so dismiss them. If her companion were a little ambitious, and asked her opinions on books or matters on which she did not wish rude hands laid, she did not hesitate to stop the intruder with "How 's your cat, Mrs. Tenner?"

"I was disappointed," she writes, "in finding my little Calvinist no companion, a cold little

thing who lives in society alone, and is looked up to as a specimen of genius. I performed a mission in secretly undermining his vanity, or trying to. Alas! never done but by mortifying affliction." From the country she writes to her sister in town, "You cannot help saying that my epistle is a striking specimen of egotism. To which I can only answer that, in the country, we converse so much more with ourselves, that we are almost led to forget everybody else. The very sound of your bells and the rattling of the carriages have a tendency to divert selfishness." "This seems a world rather of trying each others' dispositions than of enjoying each others' virtues."

She had the misfortune of spinning with a greater velocity than any of the other tops. She would tear into the chaise or out of it, into the house or out of it, into the conversation, into the thought, into the character of the stranger, — disdaining all the graduation by which her fellows time their steps: and though she might do very happily in a planet where others moved with the like velocity, she was offended here by the phlegm of all her fellow creatures, and disgusted them by her impatience. She could keep step with no human being. Her nephew [C.

C. E.] wrote of her: "I am glad the friendship with Aunt Mary is ripening. As by seeing a high tragedy, reading a true poem, or a novel like Corinne, so, by society with her, one's mind is electrified and purged. She is no statute-book of practical commandments, nor orderly digest of any system of philosophy, divine or human, but a Bible, miscellaneous in its parts, but one in its spirit, wherein are sentences of condemnation, promises and covenants of love that make foolish the wisdom of the world with the power of God."

Our Delphian was fantastic enough, Heaven knows, yet could always be tamed by large and sincere conversation. Was there thought and eloquence, she would listen like a child. Her aspiration and prayer would begin, and the whim and petulance in which by diseased habit she had grown to indulge without suspecting it, was burned up in the glow of her pure and poetic spirit, which dearly loved the Infinite.

She writes: "August, 1847: Vale. — My oddities were never designed — effect of an uncalculating constitution, at first, then through isolation; and as to dress, from duty. To be singular of choice, without singular talents and virtues, is as ridiculous as ungrateful." "It is

so universal with all classes to avoid contact with me that I blame none. The fact has generally increased piety and self-love." "As a traveller enters some fine palace and finds all the doors closed, and he only allowed the use of some avenues and passages, so have I wandered from the cradle over the apartments of social affections, or the cabinets of natural or moral philosophy, the recesses of ancient and modern lore. All say — Forbear to enter the pales of the initiated by birth, wealth, talents and patronage. I submit with delight, for it is the echo of a decree from above; and from the highway hedges where I get lodging, and from the rays which burst forth when the crowd are entering these noble saloons, whilst I stand in the doors, I get a pleasing vision which is an earnest of the interminable skies where the mansions are prepared for the poor." [1]

"To live to give pain rather than pleasure (the latter so delicious) seems the spider-like necessity of my being on earth, and I have gone on my queer way with joy, saying, 'Shall the clay interrogate?' But in every actual case, 't is hard, and we lose sight of the first necessity, — here too amid works red with default in all great and grand and infinite aims. Yet with intentions

disinterested, though uncontrolled by proper reverence for others."

When Mrs. Thoreau called on her one day, wearing pink ribbons, she shut her eyes, and so conversed with her for a time. By and by she said, "Mrs. Thoreau, I don't know whether you have observed that my eyes are shut." "Yes, Madam, I have observed it." "Perhaps you would like to know the reasons?" "Yes, I should." "I don't like to see a person of your age guilty of such levity in her dress."

When her cherished favorite, Elizabeth Hoar, was at the Vale, and had gone out to walk in the forest with Hannah, her niece, Aunt Mary feared they were lost, and found a man in the next house and begged him to go and look for them. The man went and returned saying that he could not find them. "Go and cry, 'Elizabeth!'" The man rather declined this service, as he did not know Miss Hoar. She was highly offended, and exclaimed, "God has given you a voice that you might use it in the service of your fellow creatures. Go instantly and call 'Elizabeth' till you find them." The man went immediately, and did as he was bid, and having found them apologized for calling thus, by telling what Miss Emerson had said to him.

When some ladies of my acquaintance by an unusual chance found themselves in her neighborhood and visited her, I told them that she was no whistle that every mouth could play on, but a quite clannish instrument, a pibroch, for example, from which none but a native Highlander could draw music.

In her solitude of twenty years, with fewest books and those only sermons, and a copy of Paradise Lost, without covers or title-page, so that later, when she heard much of Milton and sought his work, she found it was her very book which she knew so well, — she was driven to find Nature her companion and solace. She speaks of "her attempts in Malden, to wake up the soul amid the dreary scenes of monotonous Sabbaths, when Nature looked like a pulpit."

"Malden, November 15th, 1805. — What a rich day, so fully occupied in pursuing truth that I scorned to touch a novel which for so many years I have wanted. How insipid is fiction to a mind touched with immortal views! November 16th. — I am so small in my expectations, that a week of industry delights. Rose before light every morn; visited from necessity once, and again for books; read Butler's Ana-

logy ; commented on the Scriptures ; read in a little book, — Cicero's Letters, — a few : touched Shakspeare, — washed, carded, cleaned house, and baked. To-day cannot recall an error, nor scarcely a sacrifice, but more fulness of content in the labors of a day never was felt. There is a sweet pleasure in bending to circumstances while superior to them.

" Malden, September, 1807.[1] — The rapture of feeling I would part from, for days more devoted to higher discipline. But when Nature beams with such excess of beauty, when the heart thrills with hope in its Author, — feels that it is related to him more than by any ties of Creation, — it exults, too fondly perhaps for a state of trial. But in dead of night, nearer morning, when the eastern stars glow or appear to glow with more indescribable lustre, a lustre which penetrates the spirit with wonder and curiosity, — then, however awed, who can fear? Since Sabbath, Aunt B—— [the insane aunt] was brought here. Ah ! mortifying sight ! instinct perhaps triumphs over reason, and every dignified respect to herself, in her anxiety about recovery, and the smallest means connected. Not one wish of others detains her, not one care. But it alarms me not, I shall delight to return

to God. His name my fullest confidence. His sole presence ineffable pleasure.

"I walked yesterday five or more miles, lost to mental or heart existence, through fatigue, — just fit for the society I went into, all mildness and the most commonplace virtue. The lady is celebrated for her cleverness, and she was never so good to me. Met a lady in the morning walk, a foreigner, — conversed on the accomplishments of Miss T. My mind expanded with novel and innocent pleasure. Ah! were virtue, and that of dear heavenly meekness attached by any necessity to a lower rank of genteel people, who would sympathize with the exalted with satisfaction? But that is not the case, I believe. A mediocrity does seem to me more distant from eminent virtue than the extremes of station; though after all it must depend on the nature of the heart. A mediocre mind will be deranged in either extreme of wealth or poverty, praise or censure, society or solitude. The feverish lust of notice perhaps in all these cases would injure the heart of common refinement and virtue."

Later she writes of her early days in Malden: "When I get a glimpse of the revolutions of nations, — that retribution which seems forever

going on in this part of creation, — I remember with great satisfaction that from all the ills suffered, in childhood and since, from others, I felt that it was rather the order of things than their individual fault. It was from being early impressed by my poor unpractical aunt, that Providence and Prayer were all in all. Poor woman! Could her own temper in childhood or age have been subdued, how happy for herself, who had a warm heart; but for me would have prevented those early lessons of fortitude, which her caprices taught me to practise. Had I prospered in life, what a proud, excited being, even to feverishness, I might have been. Loving to shine, flattered and flattering, anxious, and wrapped in others, frail and feverish as myself."

She alludes to the early days of her solitude, sixty years afterward, on her own farm in Maine, speaking sadly the thoughts suggested by the rich autumn landscape around her: "Ah! as I walked out this afternoon, so sad was wearied Nature that I felt her whisper to me, 'Even these leaves you use to think my better emblem have lost their charm on me too, and I weary of my pilgrimage, — tired that I must again be clothed in the grandeurs of winter, and anon be bedizened in flowers and cascades. Oh,

if there be a power superior to me, — and that there is, my own dread fetters proclaim, — when will He let my lights go out, my tides cease to an eternal ebb? Oh for transformation! I am not infinite, nor have I power or will, but bound and imprisoned, the tool of mind, even of the beings I feed and adorn. Vital, I feel not: not active, but passive, and cannot aid the creatures which seem my progeny, — myself. But you are ingrate to tire of me, now you want to look beyond. 'T was I who soothed your thorny childhood, though you knew me not, and you were placed in my most leafless waste. Yet I comforted thee when going on the daily errand, fed thee with my mallows, on the first young day of bread failing. More, I led thee when thou knewest not a syllable of my active Cause (any more than if it had been dead eternal matter), to that Cause; and from the solitary heart taught thee to say, at first womanhood, Alive with God is enough, — 't is rapture. "[1]

"This morning rich in existence; the remembrance of past destitution in the deep poverty of my aunt, and her most unhappy temper; of bitterer days of youth and age, when my senses and understanding seemed but means of labor, or to learn my own unpopular destiny, and that

— but no more; — joy, hope and resignation unite me to Him whose mysterious Will adjusts everything, and the darkest and lightest are alike welcome. Oh! could this state of mind continue, death would not be longed for." "I felt, till above twenty years old, as though Christianity were as necessary to the world as existence; — was ignorant that it was lately promulged, or partially received." Later: "Could I have those hours in which in fresh youth I said, To obey God is joy, though there were no hereafter, I should rejoice, though returning to dust."

"Folly follows me as the shadow does the form. Yet my whole life devoted to find some new truth which will link me closer to God. And the simple principle which made me say, in youth and laborious poverty, that, should He make me a blot on the fair face of his Creation, I should rejoice in His will, has never been equalled, though it returns in the long life of destitution like an Angel. I end days of fine health and cheerfulness without getting upward now. How did I use to think them lost! If more liberal views of the divine government make me think nothing lost which carries me to His now hidden presence, there may be danger

of losing and causing others the loss of that awe and sobriety so indispensable."

She was addressed and offered marriage by a man of talents, education and good social position, whom she respected. The proposal gave her pause and much to think, but after consideration she refused it, I know not on what grounds : but a few allusions to it in her diary suggest that it was a religious act, and it is easy to see that she could hardly promise herself sympathy in her religious abandonment with any but a rarely-found partner.

" 1807. January 19, Malden [alluding to the sale of her farm]. Last night I spoke two sentences about that foolish place, which I most bitterly lament, — not because they were improper, but they arose from anger. It is difficult, when we have no kind of barrier, to command our feelings. But this shall teach me. It humbles me beyond anything I have met, to find myself for a moment affected with hope, fear, or especially anger, about interest. But I did overcome and return kindness for the repeated provocations. What is it? My uncle has been the means of lessening my property. Ridiculous to wound him for that. He was honestly seeking his own. But at last, this very

night, the bargain is closed, and I am delighted with myself: — my dear self has done well. Never did I so exult in a trifle. Happy beginning of my bargain, though the sale of the place appears to me one of the worst things for me at this time."

"January 21. Weary at times of objects so tedious to hear and see. O the power of vision, then the delicate power of the nerve which receives impressions from sounds! If ever I am blest with a social life, let the accent be grateful. Could I at times be regaled with music, it would remind me that there are *sounds*. Shut up in this severe weather with careful, infirm, afflicted age, it is wonderful, my spirits: hopes I can have none. Not a prospect but is dark on earth, as to knowledge and joy from externals: but the prospect of a dying bed reflects lustre on all the rest.

"The evening is fine, but I dare not enjoy it. The moon and stars reproach me, because I had to do with mean fools. Should I take so much care to save a few dollars? Never was I so much ashamed. Did I say with what rapture I might dispose of them to the poor? Pho! self-preservation, dignity, confidence in the future, contempt of trifles! Alas, I am disgraced. Took

a momentary revenge on —— for worrying me."

"Jan. 30. I walked to Captain Dexter's. Sick. Promised never to put that ring on. Ended miserably the month which began so worldly.

"It was the choice of the Eternal that gave the glowing seraph his joys, and to me my vile imprisonment. I adore Him. It was His will that gives my superiors to shine in wisdom, friendship, and ardent pursuits, while I pass my youth, its last traces, in the veriest shades of ignorance and complete destitution of society. I praise Him, though when my strength of body falters, it is a trial not easily described."

"True, I must finger the very farthing candle-ends, — the duty assigned to my pride; and indeed so poor are some of those allotted to join me on the weary needy path, that 't is benevolence enjoins self-denial. Could I but dare it in the bread-and-water diet! Could I but live free from calculation, as in the first half of life, when my poor aunt lived. I had ten dollars a year for clothes and charity, and I never remember to have been needy, though I never had but two or three aids in those six years of earning my home. That ten dollars my dear father earned, and one hundred dollars remain, and I can't

bear to take it, and don't know what to do. Yet I would not breathe to —— or —— my want. 'T is only now that I would not let —— pay my hotel-bill. They have enough to do. Besides, it would send me packing to depend for anything. Better anything than dishonest dependence, which robs the poorer, and despoils friendship of equal connection."

In 1830, in one of her distant homes, she reproaches herself with some sudden passion she has for visiting her old home and friends in the city, where she had lived for a while with her brother [Mr. Emerson's father] and afterwards with his widow. "Do I yearn to be in Boston? 'T would fatigue, disappoint; I, who have so long despised means, who have always found it a sort of rebellion to seek them? Yet the old desire for the worm is not so greedy as [mine] to find myself in my old haunts."

1833. "The difficulty of getting places of low board for a lady, is obvious. And, at moments, I am tired out. Yet how independent, how better than to hang on friends! And sometimes I fancy that I am emptied and peeled to carry some seed to the ignorant, which no idler wind can so well dispense." "Hard to contend for a health which is daily used in petition for

a final close." "Am I, poor victim, swept on through the sternest ordinations of Nature's laws which slay? yet I 'll trust." "There was great truth in what a pious enthusiast said, that, if God should cast him into hell, he would yet clasp his hands around Him."

"Newburyport, Sept. 1822. High, solemn, entrancing noon, prophetic of the approach of the Presiding Spirit of Autumn. God preserve my reason! Alone, feeling strongly, fully, that I have deserved nothing; according to Adam Smith's idea of society, 'done nothing;' doing nothing, never expect to; yet joying in existence, perhaps striving to beautify one individual of God's creation.

"Our civilization is not always mending our poetry. It is sauced and spiced with our complexity of arts and inventions, but lacks somewhat of the grandeur that belongs to a Doric and unphilosophical age. In a religious contemplative public it would have less outward variety, but simpler and grander means; a few pulsations of created beings, a few successions of acts, a few lamps held out in the firmament enable us to talk of Time, make epochs, write histories, — to do more, — to date the revelations of God to man. But these lamps are held to measure out

some of the moments of eternity, to divide the history of God's operations in the birth and death of nations, of worlds. It is a goodly name for our notions of breathing, suffering, enjoying, acting. We personify it. We call it by every name of fleeting, dreaming, vaporing imagery. Yet it is nothing. We exist in eternity. Dissolve the body and the night is gone, the stars are extinguished, and we measure duration by the number of our thoughts, by the activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approach to God. And the gray-headed god throws his shadows all around, and his slaves catch, now at this, now at that, one at the halo he throws around poetry, or pebbles, bugs, or bubbles. Sometimes they climb, sometimes creep into the meanest holes — but they are all alike in vanishing, like the shadow of a cloud."

To her nephew Charles: "War; what do I think of it? Why in your ear I think it so much better than oppression that if it were ravaging the whole geography of despotism it would be an omen of high and glorious import. Channing paints its miseries, but does he know those of a worse war, — private animosities, pinching, bitter warfare of the human heart, the cruel

oppression of the poor by the rich, which corrupts old worlds? How much better, more honest, are storming and conflagration of towns! They are but letting blood which corrupts into worms and dragons. A war-trump would be harmony to the jars of theologians and statesmen such as the papers bring. It was the glory of the Chosen People, nay, it is said there was war in Heaven. War is among the means of discipline, the rough meliorators, and no worse than the strife with poverty, malice and ignorance. War devastates the conscience of men, yet corrupt peace does not less. And if you tell me of the miseries of the battle-field, with the sensitive Channing (of whose love of life I am ashamed), what of a few days of agony, what of a vulture being the bier, tomb and parson of a hero, compared to the long years of sticking on a bed and wished away? For the widows and orphans — Oh, I could give facts of the long-drawn years of imprisoned minds and hearts, which uneducated orphans endure!

"O Time! Thou loiterer. Thou, whose might has laid low the vastest and crushed the worm, restest on thy hoary throne, with like potency over thy agitations and thy graves. When will thy routines give way to higher and lasting institutions? When thy trophies and thy

name and all its wizard forms be lost in the Genius of Eternity? In Eternity, no deceitful promises, no fantastic illusions, no riddles concealed by thy shrouds, none of thy Arachnean webs, which decoy and destroy. Hasten to finish thy motley work, on which frightful Gorgons are at play, spite of holy ghosts. 'T is already moth-eaten and its shuttles quaver, as the beams of the loom are shaken.

"Sat. 25. Hail requiem of departed Time! Never was incumbent's funeral followed by expectant heir with more satisfaction. Yet not his hope is mine. For in the weary womb are prolific numbers of the same sad hour, colored by the memory of defeats in virtue, by the prophecy of others, more dreary, blind and sickly. Yet He who formed thy web, who stretched thy warp from long ages, has graciously given man to throw his shuttle, or feel he does, and irradiate the filling woof with many a flowery rainbow, — labors, rather — evanescent efforts, which will wear like flowerets in brighter soils; — has attuned his mind in such unison with the harp of the universe, that he is never without some chord of hope's music. 'T is not in the nature of existence, while there is a God, to be without the pale of excitement. When the dreamy pages

of life seem all turned and folded down to very weariness, even this idea of those who fill the hour with crowded virtues, lifts the spectator to other worlds, and he adores the eternal purposes of Him who lifteth up and casteth down, bringeth to dust, and raiseth to the skies. 'T is a strange deficiency in Brougham's title of a System of Natural Theology, when the moral constitution of the being for whom these contrivances were made is not recognized. The wonderful inhabitant of the building to which unknown ages were the mechanics, is left out as to that part where the Creator had put his own lighted candle, placed a vicegerent. Not to complain of the poor old earth's chaotic state, brought so near in its long and gloomy transmutings by the geologist. Yet its youthful charms as decked by the hand of Moses' Cosmogony, will linger about the heart, while Poetry succumbs to Science. Yet there is a sombre music in the whirl of times so long gone by. And the bare bones of this poor embryo earth may give the idea of the Infinite far, far better than when dignified with arts and industry: — its oceans, when beating the symbols of ceaseless ages, than when covered with cargoes of war and oppression. How grand its preparation for souls, — souls who were to feel

the Divinity, before Science had dissected the emotions, and applied its steely analysis to that state of being which recognizes neither psychology nor element.[1]

" September, 1836. Vale. The mystic dream which is shed over the season. O, to dream more deeply; to lose external objects a little more! Yet the hold on them is so slight, that duty is lost sight of perhaps, at times. Sadness is better than walking talking acting somnambulism. Yes, this entire solitude with the Being who makes the powers of life! Even Fame which lives in other states of Virtue, palls. Usefulness, if it requires action, seems less like existence than the desire of being absorbed in God, retaining consciousness. Number the waste places of the journey, — the secret martyrdom of youth, heavier than the stake, I thought, the narrow limits which know no outlet, the bitter dregs of the cup, — and all are sweetened by the purpose of Him I love. The idea of being no mate for those intellectualists I 've loved to admire, is no pain. Hereafter the same solitary joy will go with me, were I not to live, as I expect, in the vision of the Infinite. Never do the feelings of the Infinite and the consciousness of finite frailty and ignorance harmonize so well as at this mystic

season in the deserts of life. Contradictions, the modern German says, of the Infinite and finite.

I sometimes fancy I detect in her writings a certain — shall I say — polite and courtly homage to the name and dignity of Jesus, not at all spontaneous, but growing out of her respect to the Revelation, and really veiling and betraying her organic dislike to any interference, any mediation between her and the Author of her being, assurance of whose direct dealing with her she incessantly invokes: for example, the parenthesis "Saving thy presence, Priest and Medium of all this approach for a sinful creature!" "Were it possible that the Creator was not virtually present with the spirits and bodies which He has made: — if it were in the nature of things possible He could withdraw himself, — I would hold on to the faith that, at some moment of His existence, I was present: that, though cast from Him, my sorrows, my ignorance and meanness were a part of His plan; my death, too, however long and tediously delayed to prayer, — was decreed, was fixed. Oh how weary in youth — more so scarcely now, not whenever I can breathe, as it seems, the atmosphere of the Omnipresence: then I ask not faith nor knowledge; honors, pleasures, labors, I always refuse,

compared to this divine partaking of existence; — but how rare, how dependent on the organs through which the soul operates!'

"The sickness of the last week was fine medicine; pain disintegrated the spirit, or became spiritual. I rose, — I felt that I had given to God more perhaps than an angel could, — had promised Him in youth that to be a blot on this fair world, at His command, would be acceptable. Constantly offer myself to continue the obscurest and loneliest thing ever heard of, with one proviso, — His agency. Yes, love Thee, and all Thou dost, while Thou sheddest frost and darkness on every path of mine."

For years she had her bed made in the form of a coffin; and delighted herself with the discovery of the figure of a coffin made every evening on their sidewalk, by the shadow of a church tower which adjoined the house.

Saladin caused his shroud to be made, and carried it to battle as his standard. She made up her shroud, and death still refusing to come, and she thinking it a pity to let it lie idle, wore it as a night-gown, or a day-gown, nay, went out to ride in it, on horseback, in her mountain roads, until it was worn out. Then she had another made up, and as she never travelled without

being provided for this dear and indispensable contingency, I believe she wore out a great many.

"1833. I have given up, the last year or two, the hope of dying. In the lowest ebb of health nothing is ominous; diet and exercise restore. So it seems best to get that very humbling business of insurance. I enter my dear sixty the last of this month."

"1835, June 16. Tedious indisposition: — hoped, as it took a new form, it would open the cool, sweet grave. Now existence itself in any form is sweet. Away with knowledge; — God alone. He communicates this our condition and humble waiting, or I should never perceive Him. Science, Nature, — O, I 've yearned to open some page; — not now, too late. Ill health and nerves. O dear worms, — how they will at some sure time take down this tedious tabernacle, most valuable companions, instructors in the science of mind, by gnawing away the meshes which have chained it. A very Beatrice in showing the Paradise. Yes, I irk under contact with forms of depravity, while I am resigned to being nothing, never expect a palm, a laurel, hereafter."

"1826, July. If one could choose, and without crime be gibbeted, — were it not altogether

better than the long drooping away by age without mentality or devotion? The vulture and crow would *caw caw*, and, unconscious of any deformity in the mutilated body, would relish their meal, make no grimace of affected sympathy, nor suffer any real compassion. I pray to die, though happier myriads and mine own companions press nearer to the throne. His coldest beam will purify and render me forever holy. Had I the highest place of acquisition and diffusing virtue here, the principle of human sympathy would be too strong for that rapt emotion, that severe delight which I crave; nay for that kind of obscure virtue which is so rich to lay at the feet of the Author of morality. Those economists (Adam Smith) who say nothing is added to the wealth of a nation but what is dug out of the earth, and that, whatever disposition of virtue may exist, unless something is done for society, deserves no fame, — why, I am content with such paradoxical kind of facts; but one secret sentiment of virtue, disinterested (or perhaps not), is worthy, and will tell, in the world of spirits, of God's immediate presence, more than the blood of many a martyr who has it not."

"I have heard that the greatest geniuses have died ignorant of their power and influence on

the arts and sciences. I believe thus much, that their large perception consumed their egotism, or made it impossible for them to make small calculations."

"That greatest of all gifts, however small my power of receiving, — the capacity, the element to love the All-perfect, without regard to personal happiness: — happiness? — 't is itself." She checks herself amid her passionate prayers for immediate communion with God; — "I who never made a sacrifice to record, — I cowering in the nest of quiet for so many years; — I indulge the delight of sympathizing with great virtues, — blessing their Original: Have I this right?" "While I am sympathizing in the government of God over the world, perhaps I lose nearer views. Well, I learned his existence *a priori*. No object of science or observation ever was pointed out to me by my poor aunt, but His Being and commands; and oh how much I trusted Him with every event till I learned the order of human events from the pressure of wants."

"What a timid, ungrateful creature! Fear the deepest pitfalls of age, when pressing on, in imagination at least, to Him with whom a day is a thousand years, — with whom all miseries

and irregularities are conforming to universal good! Shame on me who have learned within three years to sit whole days in peace and enjoyment without the least apparent benefit to any, or knowledge to myself; — resigned, too, to the memory of long years of slavery passed in labor and ignorance, to the loss of that character which I once thought and felt so sure of, without ever being conscious of acting from calculation."

Her friends used to say to her, "I wish you joy of the worm." And when at last her release arrived, the event of her death had really such a comic tinge in the eyes of every one who knew her, that her friends feared they might, at her funeral, not dare to look at each other, lest they should forget the serious proprieties of the hour.

She gave high counsels. It was the privilege of certain boys to have this immeasurably high standard indicated to their childhood; a blessing which nothing else in education could supply. It is frivolous to ask, — "And was she ever a Christian in practice?" Cassandra uttered, to a frivolous, skeptical time, the arcana of the Gods: but it is easy to believe that Cassandra domesticated in a lady's house would have proved a troublesome boarder. Is it the less desirable to

have the lofty abstractions because the abstractionist is nervous and irritable? Shall we not keep Flamsteed and Herschel in the observatory, though it should even be proved that they neglected to rectify their own kitchen clock? It is essential to the safety of every mackerel fisher that latitudes and longitudes should be astronomically ascertained; and so every banker, shopkeeper and wood-sawer has a stake in the elevation of the moral code by saint and prophet. Very rightly, then, the Christian ages, proceeding on a grand instinct, have said: Faith alone, Faith alone.[1]

x

XVI

SAMUEL HOAR

"Magno se judice quisque tuetur;
Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni."

LUCAN.

A YEAR ago, how often did we meet
Beneath these elms, once more in sober bloom,
Thy tall, sad figure pacing down the street,
And now the robin sings above thy tomb!
Thy name on other shores may ne'er be known,
Though Rome austere no graver consul knew,
But Massachusetts her true son shall own;
Out of her soil thy hardy virtues grew.
She loves the man that chose the conquered cause,
With upright soul that bowed to God alone;
The clean hands that upheld her equal laws,
The old religion ne'er to be outgrown;
The cold demeanor, the warm heart beneath,
The simple grandeur of thy life and death.

F. B. SANBORN.

April, 1857.

SAMUEL HOAR

HERE is a day on which more public good or evil is to be done than was ever done on any day. And this is the pregnant season, when our old Roman, Samuel Hoar, has chosen to quit this world. *Ab iniquo certamine indignabundus recessit.*[1]

He was born under a Christian and humane star, full of mansuetude and nobleness, honor and charity; and whilst he was willing to face every disagreeable duty, whilst he dared to do all that might beseem a man, his self-respect restrained him from any foolhardiness. The Homeric heroes, when they saw the gods mingling in the fray, sheathed their swords. So did not he feel any call to make it a contest of personal strength with mobs or nations; but when he saw the day and the gods went against him, he withdrew, but with an unaltered belief. All was conquered *præter atrocem animum Catonis.*

At the time when he went to South Carolina as the Commissioner of Massachusetts, in 1844, whilst staying in Charleston, pending his correspondence with the governor and the legal officers,[2] he was repeatedly warned that it was not

safe for him to appear in public, or to take his daily walk, as he had done, unattended by his friends, in the streets of the city. He was advised to withdraw to private lodgings, which were eagerly offered him by friends. He rejected the advice, and refused the offers, saying that he was old, and his life was not worth much, but he had rather the boys should troll his old head like a football in their streets, than that he should hide it. And he continued the uniform practice of his daily walk in all parts of the city. But when the mob of Charleston was assembled in the streets before his hotel, and a deputation of gentlemen waited upon him in the hall to say they had come with the unanimous voice of the State to remove him by force, and the carriage was at the door, he considered his duty discharged to the last point of possibility. The force was apparent and irresistible; the legal officer's part was up; it was now time for the military officer to be sent; and he said, "Well, gentlemen, since it is your pleasure to use force, I must go." But his opinion was unchanged.

In like manner now, when the votes of the Free States, as shown in the recent election in the State of Pennsylvania, had disappointed the hopes of mankind and betrayed the cause of

freedom, he considered the question of justice and liberty, for his age, lost, and had no longer the will to drag his days through the dishonors of the long defeat, and promptly withdrew, but with unaltered belief.

He was a very natural, but a very high character; a man of simple tastes, plain and true in speech, with a clear perception of justice, and a perfect obedience thereto in his action; of a strong understanding, precise and methodical, which gave him great eminence in the legal profession.[1] It was rather his reputation for severe method in his intellect than any special direction in his studies that caused him to be offered the mathematical chair in Harvard University, when vacant in 1806. The severity of his logic might have inspired fear, had it not been restrained by his natural reverence, which made him modest and courteous, though his courtesy had a grave and almost military air. He combined a uniform self-respect with a natural reverence for every other man; so that it was perfectly easy for him to associate with farmers, and with plain, uneducated, poor men, and he had a strong, unaffected interest in farms, and crops, and weathers, and the common incidents of rural life. It was just as easy for him to meet on the same

floor, and with the same plain courtesy, men of distinction and large ability. He was fond of farms and trees, fond of birds, and attentive to their manners and habits; addicted to long and retired walks; temperate to asceticism, for no lesson of his experience was lost on him, and his self-command was perfect. Though rich, of a plainness and almost poverty of personal expenditure, yet liberal of his money to any worthy use, readily lending it to young men, and industrious men, and by no means eager to reclaim of them either the interest or the principal. He was open-handed to every charity, and every public claim that had any show of reason in it. When I talked with him one day of some inequality of taxes in the town, he said it was his practice to pay whatever was demanded; for, though he might think the taxation large and very unequally proportioned, yet he thought the money might as well go in this way as in any other.

The strength and the beauty of the man lay in the natural goodness and justice of his mind, which, in manhood and in old age, after dealing all his life with weighty private and public interests, left an infantile innocence, of which we have no second or third example, — the strength of

a chief united to the modesty of a child. He returned from courts or congresses to sit down, with unaltered humility, in the church or in the town-house, on the plain wooden bench where honor came and sat down beside him.

He was a man in whom so rare a spirit of justice visibly dwelt, that if one had met him in a cabin or in a forest he must still seem a public man, answering as sovereign state to sovereign state; and might easily suggest Milton's picture of John Bradshaw, that "he was a consul from whom the fasces did not depart with the year, but in private seemed ever sitting in judgment on kings."[1] Everybody knew where to find him. What he said, that would he do. But he disdained any arts in his speech: he was not adorned with any graces of rhetoric, —

"But simple truth his utmost skill."[2]

So cautious was he, and tender of the truth, that he sometimes wearied his audience with the pains he took to qualify and verify his statements, adding clause on clause to do justice to all his conviction. He had little or no power of generalization. But a plain way he had of putting his statement with all his might, and now and then borrowing the aid of a good story, or a

farmer's phrase, whose force had imprinted it on his memory, and, by the same token, his hearers were bound to remember his point.

The impression he made on juries was honorable to him and them. For a long term of years, he was at the head of the bar in Middlesex, practising, also, in the adjoining counties. He had one side or the other of every important case, and his influence was reckoned despotic, and sometimes complained of as a bar to public justice. Many good stories are still told of the perplexity of jurors who found the law and the evidence on one side, and yet Squire Hoar had said that he believed, on his conscience, his client entitled to a verdict.[1] And what Middlesex jury, containing any God-fearing men in it, would hazard an opinion in flat contradiction to what Squire Hoar believed to be just? He was entitled to this respect; for he discriminated in the business that was brought to him, and would not argue a rotten cause; and he refused very large sums offered him to undertake the defence of criminal persons.

His character made him the conscience of the community in which he lived. And in many a town it was asked, "What does Squire Hoar think of this?" and in political crises, he was

entreated to write a few lines to make known to good men in Chelmsford, or Marlborough, or Shirley, what that opinion was. I used to feel that his conscience was a kind of meter of the degree of honesty in the country, by which on each occasion it was tried, and sometimes found wanting. I am sorry to say he could not be elected to Congress a second time from Middlesex.

And in his own town, if some important end was to be gained, — as, for instance, when the county commissioners refused to rebuild the burned court-house, on the belief that the courts would be transferred from Concord to Lowell, — all parties combined to send Mr. Hoar to the Legislature, where his presence and speech, of course, secured the rebuilding ; and, of course also, having answered our end, we passed him by and elected somebody else at the next term.

His head, with singular grace in its lines, had a resemblance to the bust of Dante. He retained to the last the erectness of his tall but slender form, and not less the full strength of his mind. Such was, in old age, the beauty of his person and carriage, as if the mind radiated, and made the same impression of probity on all beholders. His beauty was pathetic and touching in these

latest days, and, as now appears, it awakened a certain tender fear in all who saw him, that the costly ornament of our homes and halls and streets was speedily to be removed. Yet how solitary he looked, day by day in the world, this man so revered, this man of public life, of large acquaintance and wide family connection! Was it some reserve of constitution, or was it only the lot of excellence, that with aims so pure and single, he seemed to pass out of life alone, and, as it were, unknown to those who were his contemporaries and familiars?[1]

[The following sketch of Mr. Hoar from a slightly different point of view, was prepared by Mr. Emerson, shortly after the above paper appeared in Putnam's Magazine (December, 1856), at the request of the Editor of the Monthly Religious Magazine, and was printed there, January, 1857. It is here appended as giving some additional traits of a characteristic figure which may serve as a pendant in some respects to that of Dr. Ripley.]

Mr. Hoar was distinguished in his profession by the grasp of his mind, and by the simplicity of his means. His ability lay in the clear apprehension and the powerful statement of the material points of his case. He

soon possessed it, and he never possessed it better, and he was equally ready at any moment to state the facts. He saw what was essential, and refused whatever was not, so that no man embarrassed himself less with a needless array of books and evidences of contingent value.

These tactics of the lawyer were the tactics of his life. He had uniformly the air of knowing just what he wanted and of going to that in the shortest way. It is singular that his character should make so deep an impression, standing and working as he did on so common a ground. He was neither spiritualist nor man of genius nor of a literary nor an executive talent. In strictness, the vigor of his understanding was directed on the ordinary domestic and municipal well-being. Society had reason to cherish him, for he was a main pillar on which it leaned. The useful and practical super-abounded in his mind, and to a degree which might be even comic to young and poetical persons. If he spoke of the engagement of two lovers, he called it a contract. Nobody cared to speak of thoughts or aspirations to a black-letter lawyer, who only studied to keep men out of prison, and their lands out of attachment. Had you read Swedenborg or Plotinus to him, he would have waited till you had done, and answered you out of the Revised Statutes. He had an affinity for mathematics, but it was a taste rather than a pursuit, and of the modern sciences he liked to read popular books on geology. Yet so entirely was this

respect to the ground-plan and substructure of society a natural ability, and from the order of his mind, and not for "tickling commodity," that it was admirable, as every work of nature is, and like one of those opaque crystals, big beryls weighing tons, which are found in Acworth, New Hampshire, not less perfect in their angles and structure, and only less beautiful, than the transparent topazes and diamonds. Meantime, whilst his talent and his profession led him to guard the material wealth of society, a more disinterested person did not exist. And if there were regions of knowledge not open to him, he did not pretend to them. His modesty was sincere. He had a childlike innocence and a native temperance, which left him no temptations, and enabled him to meet every comer with a free and disengaged courtesy that had no memory in it

"Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled."[1]

No person was more keenly alive to the stabs which the ambition and avarice of men inflicted on the commonwealth. Yet when politicians or speculators approached him, these memories left no scar; his countenance had an unalterable tranquillity and sweetness; he had nothing to repent of, — let the cloud rest where it might, he dwelt in eternal sunshine.

He had his birth and breeding in a little country town, where the old religion existed in strictness, and spent all his energy in creating purity of manners and careful education.[2] No art or practice of the farm was unknown to him, and the farmers greeted him as one of

themselves, whilst they paid due homage to his powers of mind and to his virtues.

He loved the dogmas and the simple usages of his church; was always an honored and sometimes an active member. He never shrunk from a disagreeable duty. In the time of the Sunday laws he was a tithing-man; under the Maine Law he was a prosecutor of the liquor dealers. It seemed as if the New England church had formed him to be its friend and defender; the lover and assured friend of its parish by-laws, of its ministers, its rites, and its social reforms. He was a model of those formal but reverend manners which make what is called a gentleman of the old school, so called under an impression that the style is passing away, but which, I suppose, is an optical illusion, as there is always a few more of the class remaining, and always a few young men to whom these manners are native.

I have spoken of his modesty; he had nothing to say about himself; and his sincere admiration was commanded by certain heroes of the profession, like Judge Parsons and Judge Marshall, Mr. Mason and Mr. Webster. When some one said, in his presence, that Chief Justice Marshall was failing in his intellect, Mr. Hoar remarked that "Judge Marshall could afford to lose brains enough to furnish three or four common men, before common men would find it out." He had a huge respect for Mr. Webster's ability, with whom he had often occasion to try his strength at the bar,

and a proportionately deep regret at Mr. Webster's political course in his later years.

There was no elegance in his reading or tastes beyond the crystal clearness of his mind. He had no love of poetry; and I have heard that the only verse that he was ever known to quote was the Indian rule:

> "When the oaks are in the gray,
> Then, farmers, plant away."

But I find an elegance in his quiet but firm withdrawal from all business in the courts which he could drop without manifest detriment to the interests involved (and this when in his best strength), and his self-dedication thenceforward to unpaid services of the Temperance and Peace and other philanthropic societies, the Sunday Schools, the cause of Education, and specially of the University, and to such political activities as a strong sense of duty and the love of order and of freedom urged him to forward.

Perfect in his private life, the husband, father, friend, he was severe only with himself. He was as if on terms of honor with those nearest him, nor did he think a lifelong familiarity could excuse any omission of courtesy from him. He carried ceremony finely to the last. But his heart was all gentleness, gratitude and bounty.

> With beams December planets dart,
> His cold eye truth and conduct scanned;
> July was in his sunny heart,
> October in his liberal hand.

XVII

THOREAU

A QUEEN rejoices in her peers,
And wary Nature knows her own,
By court and city, dale and down,
And like a lover volunteers,
And to her son will treasures more,
And more to purpose, freely pour
In one wood walk, than learned men
Will find with glass in ten times ten.

It seemed as if the breezes brought him,
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him,
As if by secret sign he knew
Where in far fields the orchis grew.

THOREAU

HENRY DAVID THOREAU was the last male descendant of a French ancestor who came to this country from the Isle of Guernsey. His character exhibited occasional traits drawn from this blood, in singular combination with a very strong Saxon genius.

He was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on the 12th of July, 1817. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1837, but without any literary distinction. An iconoclast in literature, he seldom thanked colleges for their service to him, holding them in small esteem, whilst yet his debt to them was important. After leaving the University, he joined his brother in teaching a private school, which he soon renounced.[1] His father was a manufacturer of lead-pencils, and Henry applied himself for a time to this craft, believing he could make a better pencil than was then in use. After completing his experiments, he exhibited his work to chemists and artists in Boston, and having obtained their certificates to its excellence and to its equality with the best London manufacture, he returned home contented. His friends congratulated him that

he had now opened his way to fortune. But he replied that he should never make another pencil. "Why should I? I would not do again what I have done once." He resumed his endless walks and miscellaneous studies, making every day some new acquaintance with Nature, though as yet never speaking of zoölogy or botany, since, though very studious of natural facts, he was incurious of technical and textual science.[1]

At this time, a strong, healthy youth, fresh from college, whilst all his companions were choosing their profession, or eager to begin some lucrative employment, it was inevitable that his thoughts should be exercised on the same question, and it required rare decision to refuse all the accustomed paths and keep his solitary freedom at the cost of disappointing the natural expectations of his family and friends: all the more difficult that he had a perfect probity, was exact in securing his own independence, and in holding every man to the like duty. But Thoreau never faltered. He was a born protestant. He declined to give up his large ambition of knowledge and action for any narrow craft or profession, aiming at a much more comprehensive calling, the art of living well. If he slighted and defied the opinions of others, it was only that he

was more intent to reconcile his practice with his own belief. Never idle or self-indulgent, he preferred, when he wanted money, earning it by some piece of manual labor agreeable to him, as building a boat or a fence, planting, grafting, surveying or other short work, to any long engagements. With his hardy habits and few wants, his skill in wood-craft, and his powerful arithmetic, he was very competent to live in any part of the world. It would cost him less time to supply his wants than another. He was therefore secure of his leisure.'

A natural skill for mensuration, growing out of his mathematical knowledge and his habit of ascertaining the measures and distances of objects which interested him, the size of trees, the depth and extent of ponds and rivers, the height of mountains and the air-line distance of his favorite summits, — this, and his intimate knowledge of the territory about Concord, made him drift into the profession of land-surveyor. It had the advantage for him that it led him continually into new and secluded grounds, and helped his studies of Nature. His accuracy and skill in this work were readily appreciated, and he found all the employment he wanted.

He could easily solve the problems of the

surveyor, but he was daily beset with graver questions, which he manfully confronted. He interrogated every custom, and wished to settle all his practice on an ideal foundation. He was a protestant *à outrance*, and few lives contain so many renunciations. He was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church; he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the State; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun.' He chose, wisely no doubt for himself, to be the bachelor of thought and Nature. He had no talent for wealth, and knew how to be poor without the least hint of squalor or inelegance. Perhaps he fell into his way of living without forecasting it much, but approved it with later wisdom. "I am often reminded," he wrote in his journal, "that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Crœsus, my aims must be still the same, and my means essentially the same." He had no temptations to fight against,—no appetites, no passions, no taste for elegant trifles. A fine house, dress, the manners and talk of highly cultivated people were all thrown away on him. He much preferred a good Indian, and considered these refinements as impediments to

conversation, wishing to meet his companion on the simplest terms. He declined invitations to dinner-parties, because there each was in every one's way, and he could not meet the individuals to any purpose. "They make their pride," he said, "in making their dinner cost much; I make my pride in making my dinner cost little."[1] When asked at table what dish he preferred, he answered, "The nearest." He did not like the taste of wine, and never had a vice in his life. He said, — "I have a faint recollection of pleasure derived from smoking dried lily-stems, before I was a man. I had commonly a supply of these. I have never smoked anything more noxious."

He chose to be rich by making his wants few, and supplying them himself. In his travels, he used the railroad only to get over so much country as was unimportant to the present purpose, walking hundreds of miles, avoiding taverns, buying a lodging in farmers' and fishermen's houses, as cheaper, and more agreeable to him, and because there he could better find the men and the information he wanted.

There was somewhat military in his nature, not to be subdued, always manly and able, but rarely tender, as if he did not feel himself except

in opposition. He wanted a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, I may say required a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum, to call his powers into full exercise. It cost him nothing to say No; indeed he found it much easier than to say Yes. It seemed as if his first instinct on hearing a proposition was to controvert it, so impatient was he of the limitations of our daily thought. This habit, of course, is a little chilling to the social affections; and though the companion would in the end acquit him of any malice or untruth, yet it mars conversation. Hence, no equal companion stood in affectionate relations with one so pure and guileless. "I love Henry," said one of his friends, "but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I should as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree." [1]

Yet, hermit and stoic as he was, he was really fond of sympathy, and threw himself heartily and childlike into the company of young people whom he loved, and whom he delighted to entertain, as he only could, with the varied and endless anecdotes of his experiences by field and river: and he was always ready to lead a huckleberry-party or a search for chestnuts or grapes. Talking, one day, of a public discourse, Henry remarked that whatever succeeded with the

audience was bad. I said, "Who would not like to write something which all can read, like Robinson Crusoe? and who does not see with regret that his page is not solid with a right materialistic treatment, which delights everybody?" Henry objected, of course, and vaunted the better lectures which reached only a few persons. But, at supper, a young girl, understanding that he was to lecture at the Lyceum, sharply asked him, "Whether his lecture would be a nice, interesting story, such as she wished to hear, or whether it was one of those old philosophical things that she did not care about." Henry turned to her, and bethought himself, and, I saw, was trying to believe that he had matter that might fit her and her brother, who were to sit up and go to the lecture, if it was a good one for them.[1]

He was a speaker and actor of the truth, born such, and was ever running into dramatic situations from this cause. In any circumstance it interested all bystanders to know what part Henry would take, and what he would say; and he did not disappoint expectation, but used an original judgment on each emergency. In 1845 he built himself a small framed house on the shores of Walden Pond, and lived there two years alone,

a life of labor and study. This action was quite native and fit for him. No one who knew him would tax him with affectation. He was more unlike his neighbors in his thought than in his action. As soon as he had exhausted the advantages of that solitude, he abandoned it. In 1847, not approving some uses to which the public expenditure was applied, he refused to pay his town tax, and was put in jail. A friend paid the tax for him, and he was released. The like annoyance was threatened the next year. But as his friends paid the tax, notwithstanding his protest, I believe he ceased to resist.[1] No opposition or ridicule had any weight with him. He coldly and fully stated his opinion without affecting to believe that it was the opinion of the company. It was of no consequence if every one present held the opposite opinion. On one occasion he went to the University Library to procure some books. The librarian refused to lend them. Mr. Thoreau repaired to the President, who stated to him the rules and usages, which permitted the loan of books to resident graduates, to clergymen who were alumni, and to some others resident within a circle of ten miles' radius from the College. Mr. Thoreau explained to the President that the railroad had destroyed

the old scale of distances, — that the library was useless, yes, and President and College useless, on the terms of his rules, — that the one benefit he owed to the College was its library, — that, at this moment, not only his want of books was imperative, but he wanted a large number of books, and assured him that he, Thoreau, and not the librarian, was the proper custodian of these. In short, the President found the petitioner so formidable, and the rules getting to look so ridiculous, that he ended by giving him a privilege which in his hands proved unlimited thereafter.

No truer American existed than Thoreau. His preference of his country and condition was genuine, and his aversation from English and European manners and tastes almost reached contempt. He listened impatiently to news or *bonmots* gleaned from London circles; and though he tried to be civil, these anecdotes fatigued him. The men were all imitating each other, and on a small mould. Why can they not live as far apart as possible, and each be a man by himself? What he sought was the most energetic nature; and he wished to go to Oregon, not to London. "In every part of Great Britain," he wrote in his diary, "are discovered

traces of the Romans, their funereal urns, their camps, their roads, their dwellings. But New England, at least, is not based on any Roman ruins. We have not to lay the foundations of our houses on the ashes of a former civilization."

But idealist as he was, standing for abolition of slavery, abolition of tariffs, almost for abolition of government, it is needless to say he found himself not only unrepresented in actual politics, but almost equally opposed to every class of reformers. Yet he paid the tribute of his uniform respect to the Anti-Slavery party. One man, whose personal acquaintance he had formed, he honored with exceptional regard. Before the first friendly word had been spoken for Captain John Brown, he sent notices to most houses in Concord that he would speak in a public hall on the condition and character of John Brown, on Sunday evening, and invited all people to come. The Republican Committee, the Abolitionist Committee, sent him word that it was premature and not advisable. He replied, — "I did not send to you for advice, but to announce that I am to speak." The hall was filled at an early hour by people of all parties, and his earnest eulogy of the hero was heard by all respectfully,

by many with a sympathy that surprised themselves.[1]

It was said of Plotinus that he was ashamed of his body, and 't is very likely he had good reason for it, — that his body was a bad servant, and he had not skill in dealing with the material world, as happens often to men of abstract intellect. But Mr. Thoreau was equipped with a most adapted and serviceable body. He was of short stature, firmly built, of light complexion, with strong, serious blue eyes, and a grave aspect, — his face covered in the late years with a becoming beard. His senses were acute, his frame well-knit and hardy, his hands strong and skilful in the use of tools. And there was a wonderful fitness of body and mind. He could pace sixteen rods more accurately than another man could measure them with rod and chain. He could find his path in the woods at night, he said, better by his feet than his eyes. He could estimate the measure of a tree very well by his eye; he could estimate the weight of a calf or a pig, like a dealer. From a box containing a bushel or more of loose pencils, he could take up with his hands fast enough just a dozen pencils at every grasp. He was a good swimmer, runner, skater, boatman, and would probably outwalk

most countrymen in a day's journey. And the relation of body to mind was still finer than we have indicated. He said he wanted every stride his legs made. The length of his walk uniformly made the length of his writing. If shut up in the house he did not write at all.

He had a strong common sense, like that which Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter in Scott's romance, commends in her father, as resembling a yardstick, which, whilst it measures dowlas and diaper, can equally well measure tapestry and cloth of gold. He had always a new resource. When I was planting forest trees, and had procured half a peck of acorns, he said that only a small portion of them would be sound, and proceeded to examine them and select the sound ones. But finding this took time, he said, "I think if you put them all into water the good ones will sink;" which experiment we tried with success. He could plan a garden or a house or a barn; would have been competent to lead a "Pacific Exploring Expedition;" could give judicious counsel in the gravest private or public affairs.[1]

He lived for the day, not cumbered and mortified by his memory. If he brought you yesterday a new proposition, he would bring you to-day

another not less revolutionary. A very industrious man, and setting, like all highly organized men, a high value on his time, he seemed the only man of leisure in town, always ready for any excursion that promised well, or for conversation prolonged into late hours. His trenchant sense was never stopped by his rules of daily prudence, but was always up to the new occasion. He liked and used the simplest food, yet, when some one urged a vegetable diet, Thoreau thought all diets a very small matter, saying that "the man who shoots the buffalo lives better than the man who boards at the Graham House." He said, — "You can sleep near the railroad, and never be disturbed: Nature knows very well what sounds are worth attending to, and has made up her mind not to hear the railroad-whistle. But things respect the devout mind, and a mental ecstasy was never interrupted." He noted what repeatedly befell him, that, after receiving from a distance a rare plant, he would presently find the same in his own haunts. And those pieces of luck which happen only to good players happened to him. One day, walking with a stranger, who inquired where Indian arrow-heads could be found, he replied, "Everywhere," and, stooping forward, picked one on the instant from the

ground. At Mount Washington, in Tuckerman's Ravine, Thoreau had a bad fall, and sprained his foot. As he was in the act of getting up from his fall, he saw for the first time the leaves of the *Arnica mollis*.

His robust common sense, armed with stout hands, keen perceptions and strong will, cannot yet account for the superiority which shone in his simple and hidden life. I must add the cardinal fact, that there was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted light, serving for the ornament of their writing, was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever faults or obstructions of temperament might cloud it, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In his youth, he said, one day, "The other world is all my art; my pencils will draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing else; I do not use it as a means." This was the muse and genius that ruled his opinions, conversation, studies, work and course of life. This made him a searching judge of men. At first glance he measured his companion, and, though insensible to some fine traits of culture, could very well

report his weight and calibre. And this made the impression of genius which his conversation sometimes gave.

He understood the matter in hand at a glance, and saw the limitations and poverty of those he talked with, so that nothing seemed concealed from such terrible eyes. I have repeatedly known young men of sensibility converted in a moment to the belief that this was the man they were in search of, the man of men, who could tell them all they should do. His own dealing with them was never affectionate, but superior, didactic, scorning their petty ways, — very slowly conceding, or not conceding at all, the promise of his society at their houses, or even at his own. "Would he not walk with them?" "He did not know. There was nothing so important to him as his walk; he had no walks to throw away on company." Visits were offered him from respectful parties, but he declined them. Admiring friends offered to carry him at their own cost to the Yellowstone River, — to the West Indies, — to South America. But though nothing could be more grave or considered than his refusals, they remind one, in quite new relations, of that fop Brummel's reply to the gentleman who offered him his carriage in a

shower, "But where will *you* ride, then?" — and what accusing silences, and what searching and irresistible speeches, battering down all defences, his companions can remember!'

Mr. Thoreau dedicated his genius with such entire love to the fields, hills and waters of his native town, that he made them known and interesting to all reading Americans, and to people over the sea. The river on whose banks he was born and died he knew from its springs to its confluence with the Merrimack. He had made summer and winter observations on it for many years, and at every hour of the day and night. The result of the recent survey of the Water Commissioners appointed by the State of Massachusetts he had reached by his private experiments, several years earlier. Every fact which occurs in the bed, on the banks or in the air over it; the fishes, and their spawning and nests, their manners, their food; the shad-flies which fill the air on a certain evening once a year, and which are snapped at by the fishes so ravenously that many of these die of repletion; the conical heaps of small stones on the river-shallows, the huge nests of small fishes, one of which will sometimes overfill a cart; the birds which frequent the stream, heron, duck, shel-

drake, loon, osprey; the snake, muskrat, otter, woodchuck and fox, on the banks; the turtle, frog, hyla and cricket, which make the banks vocal, — were all known to him, and, as it were, townsmen and fellow creatures; so that he felt an absurdity or violence in any narrative of one of these by itself apart, and still more of its dimensions on an inch-rule, or in the exhibition of its skeleton, or the specimen of a squirrel or a bird in brandy.[1] He liked to speak of the manners of the river, as itself a lawful creature, yet with exactness, and always to an observed fact. As he knew the river, so the ponds in this region.

One of the weapons he used, more important to him than microscope or alcohol-receiver to other investigators, was a whim which grew on him by indulgence, yet appeared in gravest statement, namely, of extolling his own town and neighborhood as the most favored centre for natural observation. He remarked that the Flora of Massachusetts embraced almost all the important plants of America, — most of the oaks, most of the willows, the best pines, the ash, the maple, the beech, the nuts. He returned Kane's Arctic Voyage to a friend of whom he had borrowed it, with the remark, that " Most of the

phenomena noted might be observed in Concord." He seemed a little envious of the Pole, for the coincident sunrise and sunset, or five minutes' day after six months: a splendid fact, which Annursnuc had never afforded him. He found red snow in one of his walks, and told me that he expected to find yet the *Victoria regia* in Concord. He was the attorney of the indigenous plants, and owned to a preference of the weeds to the imported plants, as of the Indian to the civilized man, and noticed, with pleasure, that the willow bean-poles of his neighbor had grown more than his beans. "See these weeds," he said, "which have been hoed at by a million farmers all spring and summer, and yet have prevailed, and just now come out triumphant over all lanes, pastures, fields and gardens, such is their vigor. We have insulted them with low names, too, — as Pigweed, Wormwood, Chickweed, Shad-blossom." He says, "They have brave names, too, — Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchier, Amaranth, etc." [1]

I think his fancy for referring everything to the meridian of Concord did not grow out of any ignorance or depreciation of other longitudes or latitudes, but was rather a playful expression of his conviction of the indifferency of

all places, and that the best place for each is where he stands. He expressed it once in this wise: "I think nothing is to be hoped from you, if this bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter to you to eat than any other in this world, or in any world." [1]

The other weapon with which he conquered all obstacles in science was patience. He knew how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits, nay, moved by curiosity, should come to him and watch him.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with him. He knew the country like a fox or a bird, and passed through it as freely by paths of his own. He knew every track in the snow or on the ground, and what creature had taken this path before him. One must submit abjectly to such a guide, and the reward was great. Under his arm he carried an old music-book to press plants; in his pocket, his diary and pencil, a spy-glass for birds, microscope, jack-knife and twine. He wore a straw hat, stout shoes, strong gray trousers, to brave scrub-oaks and smilax, and to climb a tree for a hawk's or a squirrel's nest. He waded into the pool for the water-

plants, and his strong legs were no insignificant part of his armor. On the day I speak of he looked for the Menyanthes, detected it across the wide pool, and, on examination of the florets, decided that it had been in flower five days. He drew out of his breast-pocket his diary, and read the names of all the plants that should bloom on this day, whereof he kept account as a banker when his notes fall due. The Cypripedium not due till to-morrow. He thought that, if waked up from a trance, in this swamp, he could tell by the plants what time of the year it was within two days.[1] The redstart was flying about, and presently the fine grosbeaks, whose brilliant scarlet "makes the rash gazer wipe his eye," and whose fine clear note Thoreau compared to that of a tanager which has got rid of its hoarseness. Presently he heard a note which he called that of the night-warbler, a bird he had never identified, had been in search of twelve years, which always, when he saw it, was in the act of diving down into a tree or bush, and which it was vain to seek; the only bird which sings indifferently by night and by day. I told him he must beware of finding and booking it, lest life should have nothing more to show him. He said,

"What you seek in vain for, half your life, one day you come full upon, all the family at dinner. You seek it like a dream, and as soon as you find it you become its prey."

His interest in the flower or the bird lay very deep in his mind, was connected with Nature, — and the meaning of Nature was never attempted to be defined by him. He would not offer a memoir of his observations to the Natural History Society. "Why should I? To detach the description from its connections in my mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me: and they do not wish what belongs to it." His power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard. And yet none knew better than he that it is not the fact that imports, but the impression or effect of the fact on your mind. Every fact lay in glory in his mind, a type of the order and beauty of the whole.

His determination on Natural History was organic. He confessed that he sometimes felt like a hound or a panther, and, if born among Indians, would have been a fell hunter. But, restrained by his Massachusetts culture, he played out the

game in this mild form of botany and ichthyology. His intimacy with animals suggested what Thomas Fuller records of Butler the apiologist, that "either he had told the bees things or the bees had told him." Snakes coiled round his legs; the fishes swam into his hand, and he took them out of the water; he pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by the tail, and took the foxes under his protection from the hunters. Our naturalist had perfect magnanimity; he had no secrets: he would carry you to the heron's haunt, or even to his most prized botanical swamp,—possibly knowing that you could never find it again, yet willing to take his risks.

No college ever offered him a diploma, or a professor's chair; no academy made him its corresponding secretary, its discoverer or even its member. Perhaps these learned bodies feared the satire of his presence. Yet so much knowledge of Nature's secret and genius few others possessed; none in a more large and religious synthesis. For not a particle of respect had he to the opinions of any man or body of men, but homage solely to the truth itself; and as he discovered everywhere among doctors some leaning of courtesy, it discredited them. He grew to be revered and admired by his townsmen,

who had at first known him only as an oddity. The farmers who employed him as a surveyor soon discovered his rare accuracy and skill, his knowledge of their lands, of trees, of birds, of Indian remains and the like, which enabled him to tell every farmer more than he knew before of his own farm; so that he began to feel a little as if Mr. Thoreau had better rights in his land than he. They felt, too, the superiority of character which addressed all men with a native authority.

Indian relics abound in Concord, — arrow-heads, stone chisels, pestles and fragments of pottery; and on the river-bank, large heaps of clam-shells and ashes mark spots which the savages frequented. These, and every circumstance touching the Indian, were important in his eyes.[1] His visits to Maine were chiefly for love of the Indian. He had the satisfaction of seeing the manufacture of the bark canoe, as well as of trying his hand in its management on the rapids. He was inquisitive about the making of the stone arrow-head, and in his last days charged a youth setting out for the Rocky Mountains to find an Indian who could tell him that: "It was well worth a visit to California to learn it." Occasionally, a small party of Penob

scot Indians would visit Concord, and pitch their tents for a few weeks in summer on the river-bank. He failed not to make acquaintance with the best of them; though he well knew that asking questions of Indians is like catechizing beavers and rabbits. In his last visit to Maine he had great satisfaction from Joseph Polis, an intelligent Indian of Oldtown, who was his guide for some weeks.

He was equally interested in every natural fact. The depth of his perception found likeness of law throughout Nature, and I know not any genius who so swiftly inferred universal law from the single fact. He was no pedant of a department. His eye was open to beauty, and his ear to music. He found these, not in rare conditions, but wheresoever he went. He thought the best of music was in single strains; and he found poetic suggestion in the humming of the telegraph-wire.[1]

His poetry might be bad or good; he no doubt wanted a lyric facility and technical skill, but he had the source of poetry in his spiritual perception. He was a good reader and critic, and his judgment on poetry was to the ground of it. He could not be deceived as to the presence or absence of the poetic element in any

composition, and his thirst for this made him negligent and perhaps scornful of superficial graces. He would pass by many delicate rhythms, but he would have detected every live stanza or line in a volume and knew very well where to find an equal poetic charm in prose. He was so enamoured of the spiritual beauty that he held all actual written poems in very light esteem in the comparison. He admired Æschylus and Pindar; but when some one was commending them, he said that Æschylus and the Greeks, in describing Apollo and Orpheus, had given no song, or no good one. "They ought not to have moved trees, but to have chanted to the gods such a hymn as would have sung all their old ideas out of their heads, and new ones in." His own verses are often rude and defective. The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy and crude. The thyme and marjoram are not yet honey. But if he want lyric fineness and technical merits, if he have not the poetic temperament, he never lacks the causal thought, showing that his genius was better than his talent. He knew the worth of the Imagination for the uplifting and consolation of human life, and liked to throw every thought into a symbol.[1] The fact you tell is of no value, but only the impression. For this reason his

presence was poetic, always piqued the curiosity to know more deeply the secrets of his mind. He had many reserves, an unwillingness to exhibit to profane eyes what was still sacred in his own, and knew well how to throw a poetic veil over his experience. All readers of Walden will remember his mythical record of his disappointments: —

"I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks, and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who have heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud; and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves."

His riddles were worth the reading, and I confide that if at any time I do not understand the expression, it is yet just. Such was the wealth of his truth that it was not worth his while to use words in vain. His poem entitled "Sympathy" reveals the tenderness under that triple steel of stoicism, and the intellectual subtility it could animate. His classic poem on "Smoke" suggests Simonides, but is better than any poem of Simonides. His biography is in his verses.

His habitual thought makes all his poetry a hymn to the Cause of causes, the Spirit which vivifies and controls his own: —

> "I hearing get, who had but ears,
> And sight, who had but eyes before;
> I moments live, who lived but years,
> And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore."

And still more in these religious lines: —

> "Now chiefly is my natal hour,
> And only now my prime of life;
> I will not doubt the love untold,
> Which not my worth nor want have bought,
> Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
> And to this evening hath me brought." [1]

Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a person of a rare, tender and absolute religion, a person incapable of any profanation, by act or by thought. Of course, the same isolation which belonged to his original thinking and living detached him from the social religious forms. This is neither to be censured nor regretted. Aristotle long ago explained it, when he said, "One who surpasses his fellow citizens in virtue is no longer a part of the city. Their law is not for him, since he is a law to himself."

Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might fortify the convictions of prophets in the ethical laws by his holy living. It was an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. A truth-speaker he, capable of the most deep and strict conversation; a physician to the wounds of any soul; a friend, knowing not only the secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great heart. He thought that without religion or devotion of some kind nothing great was ever accomplished: and he thought that the bigoted sectarian had better bear this in mind.

His virtues, of course, sometimes ran into extremes. It was easy to trace to the inexorable demand on all for exact truth that austerity which made this willing hermit more solitary even than he wished. Himself of a perfect probity, he required not less of others. He had a disgust at crime, and no worldly success would cover it. He detected paltering as readily in dignified and prosperous persons as in beggars, and with equal scorn. Such dangerous frankness was in his dealing that his admirers called him "that terrible Thoreau," as if he spoke when silent,

and was still present when he had departed. I think the severity of his ideal interfered to deprive him of a healthy sufficiency of human society.'

The habit of a realist to find things the reverse of their appearance inclined him to put every statement in a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, — a trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later, of substituting for the obvious word and thought its diametrical opposite. He praised wild mountains and winter forests for their domestic air, in snow and ice he would find sultriness, and commended the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris. "It was so dry, that you might call it wet."

The tendency to magnify the moment, to read all the laws of Nature in the one object or one combination under your eye, is of course comic to those who do not share the philosopher's perception of identity. To him there was no such thing as size. The pond was a small ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond. He referred every minute fact to cosmical laws. Though he meant to be just, he seemed haunted by a certain chronic assumption that the science of the day pretended completeness, and he had just

found out that the *savans* had neglected to discriminate a particular botanical variety, had failed to describe the seeds or count the sepals. "That is to say," we replied, "the blockheads were not born in Concord; but who said they were? It was their unspeakable misfortune to be born in London, or Paris, or Rome; but, poor fellows, they did what they could, considering that they never saw Bateman's Pond, or Nine-Acre Corner, or Becky Stow's Swamp; besides, what were you sent into the world for, but to add this observation?"

Had his genius been only contemplative, he had been fitted to his life, but with his energy and practical ability he seemed born for great enterprise and for command; and I so much regret the loss of his rare powers of action, that I cannot help counting it a fault in him that he had no ambition. Wanting this, instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry-party. Pounding beans is good to the end of pounding empires one of these days; but if, at the end of years, it is still only beans!'

But these foibles, real or apparent, were fast vanishing in the incessant growth of a spirit so robust and wise, and which effaced its defeats with new triumphs. His study of Nature was

a perpetual ornament to him, and inspired his friends with curiosity to see the world through his eyes, and to hear his adventures. They possessed every kind of interest.

He had many elegancies of his own, whilst he scoffed at conventional elegance. Thus, he could not bear to hear the sound of his own steps, the grit of gravel ; and therefore never willingly walked in the road, but in the grass, on mountains and in woods. His senses were acute, and he remarked that by night every dwelling-house gives out bad air, like a slaughter-house. He liked the pure fragrance of melilot. He honored certain plants with special regard, and, over all, the pond-lily, — then, the gentian, and the *Mikania scandens*, and " life-everlasting," and a bass-tree which he visited every year when it bloomed, in the middle of July. He thought the scent a more oracular inquisition than the sight, — more oracular and trustworthy. The scent, of course, reveals what is concealed from the other senses. By it he detected earthiness. He delighted in echoes, and said they were almost the only kind of kindred voices that he heard. He loved Nature so well, was so happy in her solitude, that he became very jealous of cities and the sad work which their refinements and artifices made with

man and his dwelling.' The axe was always destroying his forest. "Thank God," he said, "they cannot cut down the clouds!" "All kinds of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous white paint."

I subjoin a few sentences taken from his unpublished manuscripts, not only as records of his thought and feeling, but for their power of description and literary excellence: —

"Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk."

"The chub is a soft fish, and tastes like boiled brown paper salted."

"The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple on the earth, and, at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them."

"The locust z-ing."

"Devil's-needles zigzagging along the Nut-Meadow brook."

"Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound to the healthy ear."

"I put on some hemlock-boughs, and the rich salt crackling of their leaves was like mustard to the ear, the crackling of uncountable regiments. Dead trees love the fire."

"The bluebird carries the sky on his back."

"The tanager flies through the green foliage as if it would ignite the leaves."

"If I wish for a horse-hair for my compass-sight I must go to the stable; but the hair-bird, with her sharp eyes, goes to the road."

"Immortal water, alive even to the superficies."

"Fire is the most tolerable third party."

"Nature made ferns for pure leaves, to show what she could do in that line."

"No tree has so fair a bole and so handsome an instep as the beech."

"How did these beautiful rainbow-tints get into the shell of the fresh-water clam, buried in the mud at the bottom of our dark river?"

"Hard are the times when the infant's shoes are second-foot."

"We are strictly confined to our men to whom we give liberty."

"Nothing is so much to be feared as fear. Atheism may comparatively be popular with God himself."

"Of what significance the things you can forget? A little thought is sexton to all the world."

"How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not had a seed-time of character?"

"Only he can be trusted with gifts who can present a face of bronze to expectations."

"I ask to be melted. You can only ask of the metals that they be tender to the fire that melts them. To nought else can they be tender."

There is a flower known to botanists, one of the same genus with our summer plant called "Life-Everlasting," a *Gnaphalium* like that, which grows on the most inaccessible cliffs of the Tyrolese mountains, where the chamois dare hardly venture, and which the hunter, tempted by its beauty, and by his love (for it is immensely valued by the Swiss maidens), climbs the cliffs to gather, and is sometimes found dead at the foot, with the flower in his hand. It is called by botanists the *Gnaphalium leontopodium*, but by the Swiss *Edelweisse*, which signifies *Noble Purity*. Thoreau seemed to me living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged to him of right. The scale on which his studies proceeded was so large as to require longevity, and we were the less prepared for his sudden disappearance. The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst his broken task which none else

can finish, a kind of indignity to so noble a soul that he should depart out of Nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he is. But he, at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest society; he had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world; wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home.'

XVIII

CARLYLE

Hold with the Maker, not the Made,
Sit with the Cause, or grim or glad.

CARLYLE

THOMAS CARLYLE is an immense talker, as extraordinary in his conversation as in his writing, — I think even more so.

He is not mainly a scholar, like the most of my acquaintances, but a practical Scotchman, such as you would find in any saddler's or iron-dealer's shop, and then only accidentally and by a surprising addition, the admirable scholar and writer he is. If you would know precisely how he talks, just suppose Hugh Whelan (the gardener) had found leisure enough in addition to all his daily work to read Plato and Shakspeare, Augustine and Calvin, and, remaining Hugh Whelan all the time, should talk scornfully of all this nonsense of books that he had been bothered with, and you shall have just the tone and talk and laughter of Carlyle. I called him a trip-hammer with "an Æolian attachment." He has, too, the strong religious tinge you sometimes find in burly people. That, and all his qualities, have a certain virulence, coupled though it be in his case with the utmost impatience of Christendom and Jewdom and all existing presentments of the good old story. He talks like a very unhappy

man, — profoundly solitary, displeased and hindered by all men and things about him, and, biding his time, meditating how to undermine and explode the whole world of nonsense which torments him. He is obviously greatly respected by all sorts of people, understands his own value quite as well as Webster, of whom his behavior sometimes reminds me, and can see society on his own terms.[1]

And, though no mortal in America could pretend to talk with Carlyle, who is also as remarkable in England as the Tower of London, yet neither would he in any manner satisfy us (Americans), or begin to answer the questions which we ask. He is a very national figure, and would by no means bear transplantation. They keep Carlyle as a sort of portable cathedral-bell, which they like to produce in companies where he is unknown, and set a-swinging, to the surprise and consternation of all persons, — bishops, courtiers, scholars, writers, — and, as in companies here (in England) no man is named or introduced, great is the effect and great the inquiry. Forster of Rawdon described to me a dinner at the *table d'hôte* of some provincial hotel where he carried Carlyle, and where an Irish canon had uttered something. Carlyle began to

talk, first to the waiters, and then to the walls and then, lastly, unmistakably to the priest, in a manner that frightened the whole company.

Young men, especially those holding liberal opinions, press to see him, but it strikes me like being hot to see the mathematical or Greek professor before they have got their lesson. It needs something more than a clean shirt and reading German to visit him. He treats them with contempt; they profess freedom and he stands for slavery; they praise republics and he likes the Russian Czar; they admire Cobden and free trade and he is a protectionist in political economy; they will eat vegetables and drink water, and he is a Scotchman who thinks English national character has a pure enthusiasm for beef and mutton, — describes with gusto the crowds of people who gaze at the sirloins in the dealer's shop-window, and even likes the Scotch nightcap; they praise moral suasion, he goes for murder, money, capital punishment and other pretty abominations of English law.[1] They wish freedom of the press, and he thinks the first thing he would do, if he got into Parliament, would be to turn out the reporters, and stop all manner of mischievous speaking to Buncombe, and wind-bags. "In the Long Parliament," he says,

"the only great Parliament, they sat secret and silent, grave as an ecumenical council, and I know not what they would have done to anybody that had got in there and attempted to tell out of doors what they did." They go for free institutions, for letting things alone, and only giving opportunity and motive to every man; he for a stringent government, that shows people what they must do, and makes them do it. "Here," he says, "the Parliament gathers up six millions of pounds every year to give to the poor, and yet the people starve. I think if they would give it to me, to provide the poor with labor, and with authority to make them work or shoot them, — and I to be hanged if I did not do it, — I could find them in plenty of Indian meal."[1]

He throws himself readily on the other side. If you urge free trade, he remembers that every laborer is a monopolist. The navigation laws of England made its commerce. "St. John was insulted by the Dutch; he came home, got the law passed that foreign vessels should pay high fees, and it cut the throat of the Dutch, and made the English trade." If you boast of the growth of the country, and show him the wonderful results of the census, he finds nothing so depressing as the sight of a great mob. He saw once,

as he told me, three or four miles of human beings, and fancied that "the airth was some great cheese, and these were mites." If a tory takes heart at his hatred of stump-oratory and model republics, he replies, "Yes, the idea of a pig-headed soldier who will obey orders, and fire on his own father at the command of his officer, is a great comfort to the aristocratic mind." It is not so much that Carlyle cares for this or that dogma, as that he likes genuineness (the source of all strength) in his companions.

If a scholar goes into a camp of lumbermen or a gang of riggers, those men will quickly detect any fault of character. Nothing will pass with them but what is real and sound. So this man is a hammer that crushes mediocrity and pretension. He detects weakness on the instant, and touches it. He has a vivacious, aggressive temperament, and unimpressionable. The literary, the fashionable, the political man, each fresh from triumphs in his own sphere, comes eagerly to see this man, whose fun they have heartily enjoyed, sure of a welcome, and are struck with despair at the first onset. His firm, victorious, scoffing vituperation strikes them with chill and hesitation. His talk often reminds you of what was said of Johnson: "If his pistol missed

fire, he would knock you down with the butt-end." [1]

Mere intellectual partisanship wearies him; he detects in an instant if a man stands for any cause to which he is not born and organically committed. A natural defender of anything, a lover who will live and die for that which he speaks for, and who does not care for him or for anything but his own business, he respects; and the nobler this object, of course, the better. He hates a literary trifler, and if, after Guizot had been a tool of Louis Philippe for years, he is now to come and write essays on the character of Washington, on "The Beautiful" and on "Philosophy of History," he thinks that nothing.

Great is his reverence for realities, — for all such traits as spring from the intrinsic nature of the actor. He humors this into the idolatry of strength. A strong nature has a charm for him, previous, it would seem, to all inquiry whether the force be divine or diabolic. He preaches, as by cannonade, the doctrine that every noble nature was made by God, and contains, if savage passions, also fit checks and grand impulses, and, however extravagant, will keep its orbit and return from far.

Nor can that decorum which is the idol of the Englishman, and in attaining which the Englishman exceeds all nations, win from him any obeisance. He is eaten up with indignation against such as desire to make a fair show in the flesh.

Combined with this warfare on respectabilities, and, indeed, pointing all his satire, is the severity of his moral sentiment. In proportion to the peals of laughter amid which he strips the plumes of a pretender and shows the lean hypocrisy to every vantage of ridicule, does he worship whatever enthusiasm, fortitude, love or other sign of a good nature is in a man.[1]

There is nothing deeper in his constitution than his humor, than the considerate, condescending good nature with which he looks at every object in existence, as a man might look at a mouse. He feels that the perfection of health is sportiveness, and will not look grave even at dulness or tragedy.

His guiding genius is his moral sense, his perception of the sole importance of truth and justice; but that is a truth of character, not of catechisms. He says, "There is properly no religion in England. These idle nobles at Tattersall's — there is no work or word of serious

purpose in them; they have this great lying Church; and life is a humbug." He prefers Cambridge to Oxford, but he thinks Oxford and Cambridge education indurates the young men, as the Styx hardened Achilles, so that when they come forth of them, they say, "Now we are proof; we have gone through all the degrees, and are case-hardened against the veracities of the Universe; nor man nor God can penetrate us."

Wellington he respects as real and honest, and as having made up his mind, once for all, that he will not have to do with any kind of a lie. Edwin Chadwick is one of his heroes, — who proposes to provide every house in London with pure water, sixty gallons to every head, at a penny a week; and in the decay and downfall of all religions, Carlyle thinks that the only religious act which a man nowadays can securely perform is to wash himself well.

Of course the new French revolution of 1848 was the best thing he had seen, and the teaching this great swindler, Louis Philippe, that there is a God's justice in the Universe, after all, was a great satisfaction. Czar Nicholas was his hero; for in the ignominy of Europe, when all thrones fell like card-houses, and no man was found

with conscience enough to fire a gun for his crown, but every one ran away in a *coucou*, with his head shaved, through the Barrière de Passy, one man remained who believed he was put there by God Almighty to govern his empire, and, by the help of God, had resolved to stand there.

He was very serious about the bad times; he had seen this evil coming, but thought it would not come in his time. But now 't is coming, and the only good he sees in it is the visible appearance of the gods. He thinks it the only question for wise men, instead of art and fine fancies and poetry and such things, to address themselves to the problem of society.[1] This confusion is the inevitable end of such falsehoods and nonsense as they have been embroiled with.

Carlyle has, best of all men in England, kept the manly attitude in his time. He has stood for scholars, asking no scholar what he should say. Holding an honored place in the best society, he has stood for the people, for the Chartist, for the pauper, intrepidly and scornfully, teaching the nobles their peremptory duties.

His errors of opinion are as nothing in comparison with this merit, in my judgment. This *aplomb* cannot be mimicked; it is the speaking to the heart of the thing. And in England,

where the *morgue* of aristocracy has very slowly admitted scholars into society, — a very few houses only in the high circles being ever opened to them, — he has carried himself erect, made himself a power confessed by all men, and taught scholars their lofty duty. He never feared the face of man.[1]

XIX

GEORGE L. STEARNS

"Who, when great trials come,
Nor seeks nor shunnes them; but doth calmly stay
Till he the thing and the example weigh:
All being brought into a summe
What place or person calls for he doth pay."

George Herbert.

GEORGE L. STEARNS

WE do not know how to prize good men until they depart. High virtue has such an air of nature and necessity that to thank its possessor would be to praise the water for flowing or the fire for warming us. But, on the instant of their death, we wonder at our past insensibility, when we see how impossible it is to replace them. There will be other good men, but not these again. And the painful surprise which the last week brought us, in the tidings of the death of Mr. Stearns, opened all eyes to the just consideration of the singular merits of the citizen, the neighbor, the friend, the father and the husband, whom this assembly mourns. We recall the all but exclusive devotion of this excellent man during the last twelve years to public and patriotic interests. Known until that time in no very wide circle as a man of skill and perseverance in his business; of pure life; of retiring and affectionate habits; happy in his domestic relations, — his extreme interest in the national politics, then growing more anxious year by year, engaged him to scan the fortunes of freedom with keener attention. He was an

early laborer in the resistance to slavery. This brought him into sympathy with the people of Kansas. As early as 1855 the Emigrant Aid Society was formed; and in 1856 he organized the Massachusetts State Kansas Committee, by means of which a large amount of money was obtained for the "free-state men," at times of the greatest need. He was the more engaged to this cause by making in 1857 the acquaintance of Captain John Brown, who was not only an extraordinary man, but one who had a rare magnetism for men of character, and attached some of the best and noblest to him, on very short acquaintance, by lasting ties. Mr. Stearns made himself at once necessary to Captain Brown as one who respected his inspirations, and had the magnanimity to trust him entirely, and to arm his hands with all needed help.

For the relief of Kansas, in 1856–57, his own contributions were the largest and the first. He never asked any one to give so much as he himself gave, and his interest was so manifestly pure and sincere that he easily obtained eager offerings in quarters where other petitioners failed. He did not hesitate to become the banker of his clients, and to furnish them money and arms in advance of the subscriptions which he obtained.

His first donations were only entering-wedges of his later; and, unlike other benefactors, he did not give money to excuse his entire preoccupation in his own pursuits, but as an earnest of the dedication of his heart and hand to the interests of the sufferers, — a pledge kept until the success he wrought and prayed for was consummated. In 1862, on the President's first or preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation, he took the first steps for organizing the Freedman's Bureau, — a department which has since grown to great proportions. In 1863 he began to recruit colored soldiers in Buffalo, then at Philadelphia and Nashville. But these were only parts of his work. He passed his time in incessant consultation with all men whom he could reach, to suggest and urge the measures needed for the hour. And there are few men with real or supposed influence, North or South, with whom he has not at some time communicated. Every important patriotic measure in this region has had his sympathy, and of many he has been the prime mover. He gave to each his strong support, but uniformly shunned to appear in public. For himself or his friends he asked no reward; for himself, he asked only to do the hard work. His transparent singleness of

purpose, his freedom from all by-ends, his plain good sense, courage, adherence, and his romantic generosity disarmed, first or last, all gainsayers. His examination before the United States Senate Committee on the Harper's Ferry Invasion, in January, 1860, as reported in the public documents, is a chapter well worth reading, as a shining example of the manner in which a truth-speaker baffles all statecraft, and extorts at last a reluctant homage from the bitterest adversaries.[1]

I have heard, what must be true, that he had great executive skill, a clear method and a just attention to all the details of the task in hand. Plainly he was no boaster or pretender, but a man for up-hill work, a soldier to bide the brunt; a man whom disasters, which dishearten other men, only stimulated to new courage and endeavor.

I have heard something of his quick temper, that he was indignant at this or that man's behavior, but never that his anger outlasted for a moment the mischief done or threatened to the good cause, or ever stood in the way of his hearty coöperation with the offenders when they returned to the path of public duty. I look upon him as a type of the American republican. A man of the people, in strictly private life, girt

with family ties; an active and intelligent manufacturer and merchant, enlightened enough to see a citizen's interest in the public affairs, and virtuous enough to obey to the uttermost the truth he saw, — he became, in the most natural manner, an indispensable power in the state. Without such vital support as he, and such as he, brought to the government, where would that government be? When one remembers his incessant service; his journeys and residences in many states; the societies he worked with; the councils in which he sat; the wide correspondence, presently enlarged by printed circulars, then by newspapers established wholly or partly at his own cost; the useful suggestions; the celerity with which his purpose took form; and his immovable convictions, — I think this single will was worth to the cause ten thousand ordinary partisans, well-disposed enough, but of feebler and interrupted action.

These interests, which he passionately adopted, inevitably led him into personal communication with patriotic persons holding the same views, — with two Presidents, with members of Congress, with officers of the government and of the army, and with leading people everywhere. He had been always a man of simple tastes, and

through all his years devoted to the growing details of his prospering manufactory. But this sudden association now with the leaders of parties and persons of pronounced power and influence in the nation, and the broad hospitality which brought them about his board at his own house or in New York, or in Washington, never altered one feature of his face, one trait of his manners. There he sat in the council, a simple, resolute Republican, an enthusiast only in his love of freedom and the good of men; with no pride of opinion, and with this distinction, that, if he could not bring his associates to adopt his measure, he accepted with entire sweetness the next best measure which could secure their assent. But these public benefits were purchased at a severe cost. For a year or two, the most affectionate and domestic of men became almost a stranger in his beautiful home. And it was too plain that the excessive toil and anxieties, into which his ardent spirit led him, overtasked his strength and wore out prematurely his constitution. It is sad that such a life should end prematurely; but when I consider that he lived long enough to see with his own eyes the salvation of his country, to which he had given all his heart; that he did not know an idle day;

was never called to suffer under the decays and loss of his powers, or to see that others were waiting for his place and privilege, but lived while he lived, and beheld his work prosper for the joy and benefit of all mankind, — I count him happy among men.

Almost I am ready to say to these mourners, Be not too proud in your grief, when you remember that there is not a town in the remote State of Kansas that will not weep with you as at the loss of its founder; not a Southern State in which the freedmen will not learn to-day from their preachers that one of their most efficient benefactors has departed, and will cover his memory with benedictions; and that, after all his efforts to serve men without appearing to do so, there is hardly a man in this country worth knowing who does not hold his name in exceptional honor. And there is to my mind somewhat so absolute in the action of a good man that we do not, in thinking of him, so much as make any question of the future. For the Spirit of the Universe seems to say: "He has done well; is not that saying all?"

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